ARMY RESERVE MAGAZINE

VOLUME 49, NUMBER 3

REBUILDING

Army Reserve Transformation

The 377th Theater Support Command

Around the Globe

ARMY RESERVE MAGAZINE

Since 1954.

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ON THE COVER

Maj. Joseph Charles Sasso of the 411th Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Danbury, Conn., directs rebuilding efforts in Iraq.

(PHOTO: SPEC. RYAN SMITH, 372ND MPAD)

INSIDE BACK COVER

The first of three Army Reserve Posters.

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BACK COVER

Residents of Hillsdale line up to see American soldiers as they arrive at the site for a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Hillsdale dispensary. Hillsdale is a camp for internally displaced persons in Baghdad.

(PHOTO: SPEC. RYAN SMITH, 372ND MPAD)

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U.S. ARMY

News Briefs

ARMY ONE SOURCE PROVIDES ROUND-THE-CLOCK HUMAN TOUCH

Now you can get questions about the Army answered 24 hours a day by a human, not a computer-generated voice. The service is called "Army One Source," and it went into effect August 15, 2003.

Army One Source is a 24/7 toll-free telephone number designed to provide information and referrals to Soldiers, as well as deployed civilians and their families. And it is now fully operational for Army installations and Army Reserve components worldwide.

From the United States, callers can dial (800) 464-8107. From outside the United States, callers should dial the appropriate access code to reach a U.S. number and then (800) 464-81077. All eleven digits must be dialed. Hearing-impaired callers should use (800) 364-9188, while Spanish speakers can dial (800) 832-9020.

"There are no phone trees or menus, and the phones are answered by people," said Carla Cary, Advocacy Program specialist at the U.S. Army Community and Family Services Center. "The overseas toll-free number has an extra digit. That digit identifies the call as toll-free. From countries where toll-free calls are not available, customers are able to call collect."

Army One Source is staffed by consultants who hold master's degrees in social work or psychology. The consultants can talk about a variety of subjects, including parenting, TRICARE, childcare, relocation, finances, legal issues, elder education, and everyday household matters. And, while they won't answer questions on Army administrative and personnel issues, they will direct callers to the proper place to get help with pay problems and career questions. They also can provide callers information regarding programs closest to them geographically.

"This service supplements our existing family programs. It does not replace any programs," explained Cary. "It is our attempt to broaden our service delivery."

"This service should provide a boost to Soldiers as they integrate back into their home communities, and to family morale."

The service also is available to the immediate families of Soldiers.

"The staff knows the Army, and they know who is eligible to use Army services and receive benefits," added Cary. "If a parent calls and he or she is not eligible to use Army programs, the consultants will have information regarding what may be available in the civilian community."

The staff also will have bilingual (Spanish, Korean and German) and multicultural capabilities.

"The Army recognizes that deployments are tough on everyone, and that homecoming is potentially the most difficult phase of deployment," said Cary. "This service should provide a boost to Soldiers as they integrate back into their home communities, and to family morale."

ACAP EXPANDING TO HELP ARMY PERSONNEL

The Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) has introduced several new initiatives focused on helping Soldiers and civilians find jobs after they retire or leave the Army. These initiatives are intended primarily to help retirees, demobilized Army Reserve Soldiers, and civilian employees affected by base realignment programs.

One policy change allows Army retirees and eligible family members to receive lifetime job assistance. This change extends ACAP services beyond the normal 180 days following separation.

"The service is provided on a space-available basis," said James Hoffman, ACAP director. "With a valid retired identification card, retirees can continue to receive employment assistance in preparing a competitive resume, as well as learning important job skills."

In addition, ACAP is establishing a Demobilization Resource Center to receive telephone requests for assistance from Army Reserve Component Soldiers and unit commanders during the demobilization process.

All Soldiers who have completed at least 180 days of continuous active duty and who are being released from active duty are required to receive preparation counseling and to complete the Preparation Counseling Checklist, DD Form 2648.

The Center, which will be located at the U.S. Army Personnel Command, will respond to all inquiries pertaining to eligibility for transition benefits. It also will provide referrals to service providers, such as the Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs, as well as the Army Reserve's and National Guard's transition assistance offices.

"Once the Resource Center makes contact with the Army Reserve Component Soldier and determines

that additional ACAP services or referrals are necessary, the Soldier will be referred to the closest ACAP center for continued assistance for up to 180 days after demobilization," added Hoffman.

In addition, and in order to prepare for the large numbers of Soldiers who are expected to be demobilized and released from active duty, ACAP is preparing to reinforce the counselor field workforce with additional staff at targeted ACAP demobilization installations. These staff additions will help ensure that ACAP can meet the demand to provide mandatory preparation counseling and employment assistance to those who request additional assistance prior to being released from active duty.

Installations conducting demobilization processing where ACAP does not exist, such as Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, will have temporary satellite offices established to assist in the demobilization process. At other demobilization locations, such as Fort Dix, New Jersey, and Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, ACAP will provide temporary assistance by bringing in temporary ACAP staff or training assigned staff to help with the processing.

"Civilians who are leaving the government workforce as a result of realignment or commercial outsourcing also are eligible to receive ACAP services," said Hoffman.

Recently, ACAP added a workshop targeted at Army civilians who are impacted by reductions in force, A76 studies or force realignment. Upon request, ACAP staff will present the comprehensive workshop to assist civilians with their return to the public or private sectors.

For more information about ACAP and its services, visit the revised ACAP home page at **http://www.acap.army.mil**.

CHAPLAIN CORPS HELPING SOLDIERS READJUST

Chaplains offices with all of the Army Reserve's Regional Readiness Commands are sponsoring marriage retreats for Army Reserve Soldiers coming back from the current round of mobilizations. The retreats are part of a new initiative to help Army Reserve Soldiers deal with the issues they face upon returning home.

"Before this, the Army never really had a redeployment doctrine. We just gave people their discharge papers and said 'Go home.' Now we have a program that addresses many of the realities our Soldiers experience when they come back," said Chaplain (Maj.) Thomas Eddy with the USARC Headquarters' Chaplains Office.

The new doctrine — the Deployment Cycle Support Concept Plan or DCS CONPLAN — was born in a Department of the Army think tank of which Eddy was a member. The plan includes helping Soldiers deal with relationship, medical, employment and other issues related to their return. However, the marriage retreat program is the most visible portion of the plan.

"Our leaders, namely Lt. Gen. James Helmly, have gotten behind the retreat program and, most importantly, have given us the resources to carry it out," said Chaplain (Col.) Douglas Lee, the Army Reserve's top chaplain.

Couples who take part in the weekend marriage retreats pay only nominal costs. Most of the expenses are picked up by the Army Reserve.

The retreats are structured around a marriage enhancement package called the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program, or PREP. It focuses on getting couples to communicate and gives them workable methods to help resolve issues that arise.

"It teaches couples how to communicate, especially during times of conflict. We show them some techniques designed to help them listen to each other and resolve problems," added Lee.

Currently, only 45 percent of Army Reserve Soldiers are married. For the other 55 percent who are unmarried, programs are being developed to help them cope as well. Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Gerald Nelson of the 81st Regional Readiness Command is adopting some of the principals from the PREP program and modifying them to appeal to single Soldiers.

While the chaplain corps hopes that Soldiers who want to take advantage of the resources will come willingly to their offices, they are relying on commanders and first sergeants in the field to spread the word that these resources are available. In addition, family members who feel they need help can contact their local family support organization or the chain of command, or call the Army One Source hotline toll-free at 1-800-464-8107, for assistance.

SIMMAN RAISES THE BAR ON MEDICAL TRAINING

The 89th Regional Readiness Command, headquartered in Wichita, Kansas, has received a new addition to its ranks. He's called "SimMan." And, while he doesn't sport a cape and red tights, he is expected to bring his own brand of superhuman powers to raising the bar on 91W medical training. 91W Healthcare Specialist is the new military occupation specialty that replaces the 91B Combat Medic and 91C Licensed Practical Nurse or Vocational Nurse MOSs.

SimMan, which cost approximately $30,000, was developed by Laerdal Medical Corporation especially for 91W training. He can breathe, and has a pulse and blood pressure. In addition, SimMan also can be programmed to display different symptoms that 91W trainees can react to.

PHOTO: UNKNOWN

1st Lt. Mark Wilkinson of the 21st General Hospital and 1st Lt. Lawton Hicks of the 325th Field Hospital heed the warning to "clear" as 2nd Lt. Wesley McCullough of the 325th Field Hospital tries to restart the heart of the 89th RRC's new simulation mannequin.

Effective October 2001, the Department of Combat Medic Training 91W course length was changed from 10 to 16 weeks so that students could develop advanced skills in combat medic and emergency medical techniques.

"Now, 91Ws are Emergency Medical Technician qualified and are expected to be re-certified according to National Registry standards," said Lt. Col. Beth Martinez, a sustainment training coordinator for the 91W transition. "This is consistent with the Army's plan to convert all current medics to 91W."

"The Active Army has until 2009, and the Army Reserve components until 2008, to have the process completed. SimMan will help with that transition," she added.

Because SimMan is computer-based, different scenarios can be programmed into the 91W training.

"The trainers can program different symptoms into SimMan. This in turn creates different reactions by the 91Ws," said Master Sgt. Steve Wadas, Senior Medical NCO with the 4223rd U.S. Army Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska. "Those reactions are automatically logged within the attached computer, and can be printed out at any time for the individual Soldiers to review and evaluate."

"Gone are the days when we would simulate the appropriate medical procedures. Now, Soldiers have the ability to perform those tasks directly on SimMan," added Wadas.

If a Soldier does not perform a task properly, the computer automatically will adjust SimMan's response. If the condition is serious enough, SimMan could even code (stop breathing). The Soldier then would have to react to that situation.

According to Wadas, it is this ability of SimMan to react in a number of ways that is elevating the level of training for 91Ws.

"In a classroom situation, you can't give a human patient drugs, intubate them or get them to respond to a variety of treatments like you can with SimMan," said Wadas. "SimMan allows us to have real-life, scenario-based training, which should elevate Soldiers' medical skills, allowing them to be better prepared for most all types of medical missions."

"He's the best EKG simulator I've ever seen," said 2nd Lt. Wesley McCullough, a nurse with the 325th Field Hospital in Independence, Missouri, who recently attended a Train-the-Trainer class. "I know that SimMan was designed specifically for 91W. However, I think he would be a good training tool for other medical professions as well."

GATHERING HISTORY AS IT HAPPENS

The gathering of documents, photographs and personal accounts from mobilized units is critical to properly documenting the Army Reserve's contribution to the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). And now gathering that information has never been easier.

Currently, there are several ways to gather historical information and send it in to the Office of Army Reserve History at the U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters at Fort McPherson, Georgia. The newest way is via a site on the Army Knowledge Online (AKO), which contains an autobiographical sheet that an individual Soldier can complete, as well as a unit narrative sheet that mobilized unit leaders can fill out. The completed documents should be sent via email to **GWOTHistory@usarc-emh2.army.mil.**

In addition to the documents obtained from the AKO site, units can download onto computer disks (CDs) everything from unit rosters, photographs, and even movies, and send that data to the Office of Army Reserve History.

Another method of capturing data that has been used successfully in the past is to detail a Soldier to go around with a tabbed folder to unit members. The tabs explain what documents the different sections can provide. As the different sections receive the folder, they can fill it with all relevant documents and CDs.

Photographs of particular interest include those showing Soldiers performing their missions — everything from operating computers, driving trucks and pumping fuel to conducting training classes. Units can facilitate the process by offering to pay for double prints of any photographs Soldiers take, as well as by providing extra batteries to Soldiers with digital cameras. In addition, units can even distribute disposable cameras to Soldiers and unit leaders to take pictures.

It is important to keep in mind that the contribution of the Army Reserve to the GWOT is extensive. And the products that units collect now will help accurately document that contribution for future generations, as well as help explain the role of the Army Reserve in the national defense of the United States to its various publics.

ARPERSCOM AND DA PERSCOM MERGE AND INTEGRATE WEB SITES

In October 2003, the Army Reserve Personnel Command (ARPERSCOM), based in St. Louis, Missouri, and the U.S. Total Army Personnel Command, headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, were merged to form the U.S. Army Human Resources Command (HRC).

The new command, integrating the two organizations, will act as a multi-component field operating agency under the Army's deputy chief of staff for personnel, bringing together all human resource management functions for the Army and Army Reserve to better meet the future needs of Army Soldiers and civilians.

There have been no immediate changes to ARPERSCOM's structure under the merger, and all existing services are expected to continue uninterrupted throughout the transformation. During the next fiscal year, business processes will be evaluated within the new command to determine the future structure of HRC.

In addition, ARPERSCOM's existing 2xCitizen Web site has become part of the new HRC Web site, **https://www.hrc.army.mil**. All content and tools currently available on **2xCitizen** and the portal, **My2xCitizen**, will continue to be made available to customers. This includes secure access to Army Reserve personnel record information, board data and retirement tools. The new HRC Web site will act as the central point for Soldiers in both the Active Army and the Army Reserve to access their personnel data.

More information on the Army's human resources transformation will be released as it becomes available. To get the latest information, visit **https://www.hrc.army.mil**.

A NEW LOOK FOR THE ARMY RESERVE WEB SITE

The Army Reserve Web site (**http://www.army.mil/usar**) went public with a new look in November 2003, completing the first part of a three-phase update project. The new design provides relevant information in an easy-to-use format.

The goal of Phase 1 was to establish a new look and navigation for the site, making it more user-friendly to all audiences, both inside and outside the Army Reserve. Phases 2 and 3 will provide information on regional and subordinate commands and expand the resources and information available to Soldiers and Commanders. AR

ARMY RESERVE
"We make the Army whole."
- Lieutenant General James R. Helmly, Chief, Army Reserve
Read the Army Reserve Mission
Providing Support for the Global War on Terror
Army Reserve Unit Integral to Kuwait Stryker Offload
Lighter. Faster. Smarter.

http://www.army.mil/usar

Elsewhere in the News

EMPLOYERS STEP UP TO THE PLATE

Home Depot, a multi-billion dollar corporation headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, is doing more than its share to support America's National Guardsmen and Army Reserve Soldiers who have left their jobs to answer the country's call to arms.

In July, Home Depot President and Chief Executive Officer Bob Nardelli signed a Statement of Support for the National Guard and Reserve allowing all Home Depot employees either mobilized or on active duty to continue receiving their full salary, health insurance and retirement benefits for six months. For Soldiers whose checks fall short of what they were receiving as full-time employees of Home Depot, the company will make up the difference in pay.

Home Depot also has launched another new national initiative, called Project Homefront. This initiative is designed to help military families repair and maintain their homes while family members are on active duty.

Home Depot joins Verizon Wireless, Dell Computer, Cisco Systems, Goldman Sachs and more than 300 other companies that have signed statements of support.

ARMY RESERVE TOPS IN SUPPLY EXCELLENCE AWARD COMPETITION

Three European-based Army Reserve units and three members of the 7th Army Reserve Command (ARCOM) were recognized for supply excellence in the Army-wide 2003 Chief of Staff, Army (CSA) Supply Excellence competition.

In the Army Reserve component category of competition, Headquarters, 7th ARCOM, Schwetzingen, Germany, won the Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) Upper category (Large) level, with the Command's 3747th Multi-Functional Training Brigade, Europe, in Grafenwoehr, receiving an honorable mention in the same category.

Another subordinate unit of the 7th ARCOM, the Southern European Task Force (Augmentation), Vicenza, Italy, was runner-up in the TDA Small category, receiving recognition for the third year in a row.

For the second time in as many years, three 7th ARCOM individuals were recognized as "Best of the Best" winners in the Army Reserve component competition. Chief Warrant Officer Ronald L. Kissee, HQ, 7th ARCOM, won the Property Book Officer Competition; Master Sgt. Ricky Hamrick, Southern European Task Force (Augmentation) won the S 4 Noncommissioned Officer-in-Charge category; and Staff Sgt. James Persinger, Southern Eastern Task Force (Augmentation) won the Unit Armorer category.

7th ARCOM units have won or placed in the CSA's Supply Excellence awards program for the past five years. Created in 1986, the competition was created to enhance logistical readiness, command supply discipline, and recognize group and individual supply initiatives.

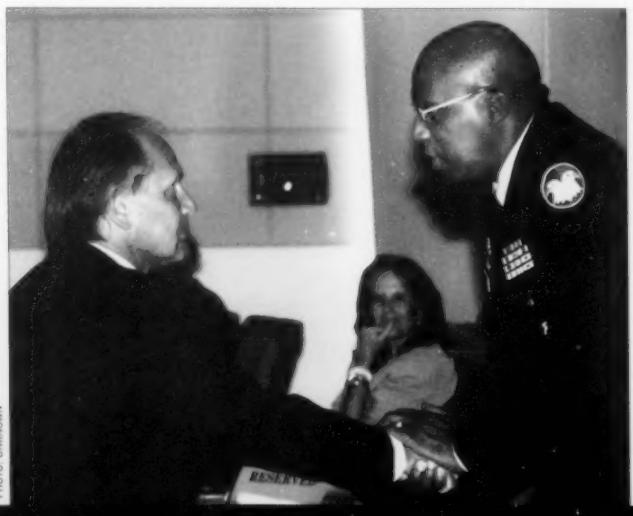
TWO ARMY RESERVE FIELD KITCHENS AWARDED TOP ARMY PRIZE

It's said that an army marches on its stomach. If that is the case, then the members of the Army Reserve's 75th Combat Support Hospital and 900th Quartermaster Company literally should be rolling through the trenches.

Recently, the 75th from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and the 900th from El Paso, Texas, were named the best field kitchens in the Army Reserve. Both were recipients of the Phillip A. Connelly Award, the Army's highest food service award, during the Joint Services Excellence in Food Service Awards.

According to Edward Siegler, a food service specialist with the U.S. Army Reserve Command, recent changes in Army Reserve food service procedures have limited Reserve units to competition in the field kitchen category. This is the result of fewer meals being cooked by Soldiers during drills. However, this did not limit the amount of entrants in this year's competition.

"Surprisingly, although our units are cooking less, we had more competitors for this year's award than in previous years," said Siegler.



Bob Nardelli, President and CEO of Home Depot (left), and Maj. Gen. Charles E. Wilson, Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Army Reserve Command.

PHOTO: UNKNOWN

PHOTO: EDWARD SIEGLER, U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND

Sgt. Deyuma Baker *(left)* and Sgt. 1st Class James Spencer from the 75th Combat Support Hospital from Tuscaloosa, Ala., accept the Connelly Award, the Army's highest food service award.

And, while some units may be cooking less, the 75th's food section still cooks at every drill.

"We get a lot of practice," said Sgt. 1st Class James Spencer, section leader for the 75th. "We didn't even know we were in the competition until somebody told us. And, even after we found out, we just kept doing the things we normally do. Everyone in my section works hard. They deserve the recognition."

The competitors were judged based upon a number of criteria, including kitchen safety, cooking ability and cleanliness.

"It's scored sort of like figure skating. You start with a perfect score, and then points are deducted as deficiencies are found," added Siegler. "There is a lot of artistry involved today in cooking Soldiers' meals. And the Soldiers really appreciate it when their cooks do a good job."

EIGHT ARMY RESERVE ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVE DEPLOYMENT EXCELLENCE AWARD

The Army Chief of Staff has recognized eight Army Reserve organizations with Deployment Excellence Awards.

The 7th Army Reserve Command (ARCOM) took top honors in the supporting unit category for the Army Reserve. Second place went to the 4013th Garrison Support Unit from Fort Polk, Louisiana.

"The 7th ARCOM in Heidelberg, Germany, mobilized more than 70 percent of the command from five locations throughout Germany and Italy," said Maj. Gen. Claude V. Christianson, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, G-4, in his speech during the awards ceremony. "The Command supported four contingency operations and two separate war plans simultaneously."

During its largest and most challenging mobilization, the 7th ARCOM mobilized troops for Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom, supported peacekeeping missions in both Bosnia and Kosovo, and assisted Europe-based Active Army and stateside Army Reserve units deploying to Southwest Asia.

"This award is a great testament to the teamwork and leadership of our Noncommissioned Officers and the Soldiers on the ground, who are truly deserving of this recognition," said Brig. Gen. Richard M. Tabor, Commander, 7th ARCOM. "Without their hard work and dedication, and the commitment of the ARCOM staff, we could not have gotten through this challenging time."

The award, which is presented annually, recognizes deploying units, supporting units and installations for outstanding mission accomplishment that meets or exceeds Army standards. AR

Members of the 7th ARCOM pose with representatives from the Army staff after receiving the Deployment Excellence Award.

PHOTO: LT. COL. JON DAHMS, 7TH ARCOM PAO

DEPLOYMENT EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENTS

SUPPORTING UNIT CATEGORY

- First Place — 7th ARCOM, Schwetzingen, Germany
- Runner Up — 4013th Garrison Support Unit, Fort Polk, Louisiana

LARGE UNIT CATEGORY

- First Place — 1190th Deployment Support Brigade, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Runner Up — 418th Quartermaster Battalion, Tucson, Arizona

SMALL UNIT CATEGORY

- First Place — 805th Transportation Detachment (Logistics Support Vessel), Tacoma, Washington
- Runner Up — 419th Transportation Company, Salt Lake City, Utah

INSTALLATION CATEGORY

- First Place — Fort Dix, New Jersey
- Runner Up — Fort McCoy, Wisconsin

Army Reserve
TRANSFORMATION

Human Resource Initiatives

Interview with BG Gary Profit
Deputy Chief, Army Reserve
November 2003

Office of the Chief, Army Reserve (OCAR): The Army Reserve is working on a number of changes to its Human Resources policies and practices (see sidebar for a summary of changes). Why are these changes being made?

BG Profit: The simple answer is that we must in order to remain ready and relevant, while at the same time caring for Soldiers and their families. As we have said on many occasions, the world has changed, and so must the Army Reserve. We are part of an Army at war for a Nation at war and are being called upon more and more often. We need to be ready when that call comes — ready with Soldiers who are trained, available, and accessible. At the same time, we need to make sure we're doing everything possible to support our Soldiers and their families. We're working on dozens of initiatives that will help us better organize, man, train, equip, mobilize, and deploy our Soldiers and units. A number of them are being tested and rolled out now. Others are still in the planning stages. These programs represent some of the first steps to move the Army Reserve from the Current Force to the Future Force.

OCAR: You mentioned the need to improve readiness. How will these changes help Army Reserve readiness?

BG Profit: A large part of what we're doing is reorganizing so unit Commanders can focus on training Soldiers instead of doing paperwork. TTHS is a good example. If a Soldier isn't qualified in his duty MOS, he'll be moved to TTHS where a trained personnel manager will work with him to get him qualified. The Soldier will get better guidance and more attention from these managers, and the Commander is free to focus on training the Soldiers available for deployment to higher levels of proficiency.

Another goal is to reserve unit slots for Soldiers who are qualified and available for deployment. That will instantly increase readiness. TTHS helps with this and so does the DEP. Instead of recruiting new Soldiers and assigning them to a unit before they go to Basic Training, they'll stay in the DEP and be the responsibility of the recruiter. This keeps slots in units open for qualified and available Soldiers and focuses the Commander's time on creating a unit that is 100% ready and available for deployment at all times.

The IA program is designed to solve a different readiness problem. More and more, the Army needs just one or two people to augment an Active Component unit. Today, we pull them from a TPU. This solves the Army's need, but creates a hole in one of our units and decreases that unit's readiness. By setting up an Individual Augmentee program, we can have a group of Soldiers in high-demand specialties who are trained and ready to go when needed without hurting unit readiness.

OCAR: When do the changes take effect?

BG Profit: It varies. We're making changes as quickly as we can because the environment demands it. The DEP and TTHS programs are being piloted in the 81st Regional Readiness Command right now. The implementation is going as expected. We're capturing lessons and learning from them to ensure we achieve the results we want. We'll be expanding to other RRCs by the beginning of next fiscal year. OPMS and RPSCs are on schedule to be implemented later this fiscal year, and we're working hard to roll out the IA program in 2004 as well.

OCAR: What's the impact on individual Soldiers?

BG Profit: Soldiers will benefit from these changes in many ways. First, they will receive better attention to their needs, whether they're in TTHS, DEP, IA or a TPU. The goal is to develop programs that target Soldiers with different needs — whether they're brand new recruits in the DEP who need to get ready for Basic Training or experienced Soldiers in the IA who want to volunteer for missions. Second, Soldiers will benefit from an organization and leaders who are more focused on readiness and training. Third, Soldiers will be better informed about their status and options with these new programs. OPMS is a good example. Under OPMS, there's more visibility about Officer career paths, moving the Army Reserve from a force structure centric model to one focused on manpower inventory management.

OCAR: What's next?

BG Profit: As I mentioned before, we're working on dozens of initiatives and ideas to achieve our goals of readiness and Soldier support. We're constantly reviewing and evaluating proposals, and we keep the good ones and throw out the not so good ones. If it's a no-brainer, we move to implementation right away. If it's more complex, we'll pilot the program in one part of the country to learn before doing. Then we can expand to the rest of the organization.

In our current situation, change is the only constant. I'm optimistic that we're on the right path with these HR initiatives, and I expect more positive changes in the future. AR

Article submitted by the Office of the Chief, Army Reserve.

Summary of HR Initiatives

TTHS: Trainees, Transients, Holdees and Students Account

Soldiers who are non-DMOSQ or non-deployable will be assigned to the TTHS account, freeing up unit spaces for deployable Soldiers. TTHS Managers at each Regional Readiness Command will be responsible for working with the Soldiers in the TTHS account to get them trained and qualified. The target is to move Soldiers out of the TTHS account and back to units within 180 days.

OPMS: Officer Personnel Management System

The Army Reserve is adopting the Army's life cycle management tool for managing Officers' careers. The number of generalist positions will be reduced, and the number of Officer slots in each field will be rationalized to create a pyramid-shaped organizational structure. The promotion system will also be changed to ensure that everyone who is promoted has a slot.

RPSC: Regional Personnel Service Centers

Within HR Command in St. Louis, personnel managers will form virtual PSCs aligned with the Regional Readiness Commands. The Regional PSCs will perform pro-active individualized professional development and career progression management for Soldiers in their regions. Personnel Management Officers and NCOs will coordinate all aspects of a Soldier's lifecycle with the Army Reserve, including education, training and moves.

DEP: Delayed Entry Program

Non-prior service enlistees will no longer be assigned to a unit when they sign a contract. Instead, they will be placed in the DEP and become part of the IRR. DEP Soldiers will not attend or be paid for drills, and they will be the responsibility of recruiters instead of commanders. When DEP Soldiers ship to Initial Entry Training (IET), they will be removed from the DEP and assigned to the TTHS account.

IA: Individual Augmentees

The Army Reserve is establishing an "Augmentee Unit" of trained and ready volunteers who can be deployed as individuals when needed by the Army or Army Reserve. IAs will no longer be filling TPU spaces, so their deployment will not affect TPU readiness. IAs will continue to drill with their designated units until their skill set is required. The mix of MOSs for the IA program will be based upon high demand specialties that are often needed on an individual basis.

Rebuilding IRAQ

Operation Iraqi Freedom has succeeded in deposing Saddam Hussein, but there's much work to be done before the mission can be considered a success. Helping rebuild Iraq, as well as winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people, remains a major initiative of the Soldiers of the Army Reserve.

PHOTO: SPEC. RYAN SMITH, 377ND MPAD

Members of the 411th Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserve Unit from Danbury, Conn., provide assistance for reconstruction efforts in Baghdad.

EVALUATING RECONSTRUCTION EFFORTS

The 411th Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Danbury, Connecticut, is working to provide positive results. The unit's Tactical Support Team 4 is focused upon operations involving reconstruction and public safety — missions that greatly legitimize America's presence in Baghdad according to the Commander of the team, Maj. Joseph Charles Sasso.

"Rebuilding infrastructure, and police and firefighting capabilities are the keys to success," he said. "That's why our job is to continually assess and monitor the construction projects here."

During routine missions, the Soldiers go to sites where construction is taking place, such as in Al Thawra, the neighborhood formerly known as Saddam City. Al Thawra is home to nearly two million people and is the poorest community in Baghdad.

The infrastructure in Al Thawra, including power lines, sewage pipes, water lines and roads, is in bad shape, either because of poor initial workmanship or because of neglect during Saddam Hussein's regime. Working with local contractors, the 411th is trying to turn Al Thawra around.

One project concerns restoring pipelines in Al Thawra in an area where raw sewage forms pools in the streets where children play. The unit has made a deal with a local contractor to replace the worn-out pipes that are at the heart of the problem. The contractor has promised to replace the lines according to American quality standards.

Sasso and his team regularly check on these projects to ensure that the work is moving forward smoothly. While assessing the progress of a project and performing quality control checks, the unit also has the opportunity to address other issues raised by the local citizens.

Working with an interpreter, Sasso spoke with locals concerning everything from looting to water and electricity shortages.

"We serve as the nucleus for people who need solutions to problems or simply need to sound off," said Sasso. "The problems these Iraqis face are the result of years of oppression and war. Every month, working with and through them, we make significant strides."

Mostly, we focus on a few important projects. The soccer fields and swimming pools can wait for now. When people have clean water to drink, gas and electricity, and can feel secure out in the streets, then we can worry about the luxuries," added Sasso.

TRAINING LOCAL POLICE TO ENFORCE THE LAW, NOT BRUTALITY

When the 382nd Military Police Detachment, an Army Reserve unit from San Diego, California, entered Baghdad, the Iraqi police force showed real enthusiasm. So much enthusiasm, in fact, that the MPs quickly became concerned.

The first morning they visited the jailhouse, two prisoners were behind bars. Later that evening, the cells were practically bursting at the seams with prisoners. It was this kind of over-enthusiasm that led to the courses in police training currently being conducted by Soldiers of the 382nd for the Iraqi police.

Reconstruction efforts in Iraq.

PHOTO: SPEC. RYAN SMITH, 372ND MPAD

Cpl. James Martinez with the 382nd Military Police Detachment, an Army Reserve Unit from San Diego, Calif., lectures Iraqi police officers on the importance of human rights.

PHOTO: SGT. MARK S. RICKERT, 372ND MPAD

"If Sam here is my friend and I raise the soles of my feet toward him, should you arrest me?" asked the 382nd's Cpl. James Martinez, who is lecturing to a class of about 25 Iraqi police officers.

By the grumbles emanating from the officers, Martinez senses that the Iraqis aren't quite sure.

"No? Why not? I'm not hurting him. It's my right to be able to express myself in a peaceful manner," said Martinez as he tries to help the Iraqis understand the rights of individuals.

The class is part of a three-week course designed to focus primarily on human rights — a concept that is both alien and frightening to these people who have been oppressed for so much of their lives.

According to Martinez, the former Iraqi mindset has been hard to break. Iraqi police officers remain heavily influenced by the former regime, which routinely discriminated against its citizens on the basis of age, sex and economic status.

"We have to teach them equal rights for women and children as well," said Cpl. Kenneth A. Johnson, another instructor with the 382nd.

To that end, the MPs have brought in a female sergeant to teach a class.

"Every jaw hit the floor when they learned a female would be teaching a class," added Johnson. "But it was important to show the Iraqi police officers that a female can do the job. That they are strong, both mentally and physically."

Another hurdle the MPs are having to overcome is the antiquated Iraqi justice system, which imposed procedures that would be hard for any American to grasp. As an example, the MPs recount how the old Iraqi police force would have to consult with a judge and obtain a warrant before restraining anyone in the streets who might be firing a weapon.

"It's a big challenge re-educating the Iraqis to understand that laws are meant to give police officers the flexibility to evaluate situations on the spot, and to take appropriate actions before going to a judge," said Johnson.

"Before the war, the regime distorted the laws and the Iraqis upheld orders rather than human rights," he added. "Now, they are being taught to use the laws to protect the rights of ordinary people."

PHOTO: SPEC. CHAD D. WILKERSON, 372ND MPAD

Staff Sgt. Sammie Hamm Jr., a food preparations specialist with the 1014th Quartermaster Company, an Army Reserve Unit from Athens, Ga., goes through the daily routine of checking inventory at Logbase Seitz, near Baghdad International Airport.

FEEDING THE TROOPS AND DODGING BULLETS

In the Army, support jobs typically are considered to be less intense and less dangerous than many of the other military occupations. However, try telling that to Staff Sgt. Sammie Hamm, Jr.

Hamm, a food preparations specialist with the 1014th Quartermaster Company, an Army Reserve unit from Athens, Georgia, and currently rations noncommissioned officer for the 541st Maintenance Battalion, has been in Iraq for several months taking care of the troops located around Logbase Seitz, near Baghdad International Airport. It is a job that literally has had him in the line of fire.

"Being in a support MOS [military occupation specialty], you always end up somewhere behind the front lines," said Hamm. "But there always is the possibility that you could become a victim of random violence."

"There have been many times when I've heard mortars being fired. I just knew they were coming toward me. And the only thing I could think to do was just run," added Hamm.

And it's a good thing that Hamm did run. Otherwise, the injuries he sustained during one violent attack could have been much worse. As it was, Hamm had to be medically evacuated to a nearby medical treatment facility where medics pulled shrapnel out of multiple places on Hamm's body, including his chest, stomach and big toe.

"I did not even know my foot had been hit until I saw the blood," said Hamm.

Following the attack, Hamm's commander called Hamm's family to make them aware of the situation and to reassure them that Hamm's injuries were not life-threatening. The attack, however, made Hamm, a Purple Heart medal recipient, more aware of his surroundings and more appreciative of his life.

"My injuries have healed and I will move on with my life, but with a much more positive attitude," he said. "This mission has to go on."

According to Hamm, his job is what keeps him going and it will take more than shrapnel to keep him from doing it.

"I love my job. I love to cook and to see the smiles on the faces of the Soldiers coming into my dining facility to get a nice cold cup of lemonade," added Hamm. "It's one thing to feed MREs (Meals Ready to Eat) to Soldiers three times a day. It's another to have them come indoors when it is really hot outside and give them a full-fledged meal and something cold to drink. We let them know we care."

ASSESSING WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN IRAQ

One part of the reconstruction in Iraq that has drawn relatively little attention is the issue of women's rights. However, a team of Army Reserve Soldiers is working with women leaders in Kurdistan and the surrounding areas to determine how best to elevate the standing of women in a country that historically has treated them as little more than chattels.

Recently, members from the 352nd Civil Affairs Command, an Army Reserve unit from Riverdale, Maryland, took a trip to Kurdistan in northern Iraq. Part of their mission was to touch base with political and community leaders to discuss women's rights in Iraq.

Women leaders in the community accompanied the team during the four days they spent in Sulaimania to point out instances of women's suffering and detail how they were trying to bring about change.

"We went to two women's organizations during our time in Kurdistan — the Women's Training and Social Development Center and a women's media center," said Sfc. Janis Albuquerque, a civil affairs specialist with the 352nd, who acted as a liaison between the women's organizations and the U.S. military, and is an advisor to the Ministry of Youth and Sport in Baghdad. "They always like to see a female and to hear another women's perspective. It's also important for them to see that a woman can perform the duties of a soldier, which is taboo in Iraq."

PHOTO: SFC. CHAD D. WILKERSON, 372ND MPAD

Sfc. Janis Albuquerque, a member of the 352nd Civil Affairs Command, an Army Reserve Unit from Riverdale, Md., poses with a Kurdish girl during a sports demonstration at a youth sports facility in Kurdistan in Northern Iraq.

Kurdistan, which has been operating independently of the Iraqi central government since 1991, historically has been much more open-minded when it comes to women's rights than the rest of Iraq. Therefore, the Kurd women can offer valuable insights into how the position of women in Iraq as a whole can be improved.

The information Albuquerque has been collecting about Kurdish women and their progress over the last decade is going to help the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) outline a program for women's rights in Baghdad and the rest of Iraq.

"From talking to the women involved with the movement here, it looks like they have come out of the darkness," said Albuquerque. "These women are very passionate about their pursuits and already have accomplished a great deal."

Albuquerque described the Kurdish women as modern and contemporary. They do not wear the traditional head wraps or black robes seen throughout the south of Iraq. Rather, they can be seen wearing blue jeans and T-shirts on the streets of Sulaimania and Irbil — an indication of the Kurds' desire to become more Westernized.

"These women talk very freely with men, and most are very well-educated. Very few have been oppressed in the way most Arab women have been," added Albuquerque, who sees similarities between the Kurdish women and the American women of the 1970s, who were very determined about elevating their status in society.

Women's organizations in Kurdistan hope to have an ongoing relationship with coalition forces, which they anticipate will help bring greater attention to their cause and set them on a more equal track with the rest of the modern world.

"We want to cooperate with the U.S. military to promote the rights of women," said one Kurdish woman. "Women's rights and human rights go hand-in-hand."

"Right now, the Kurds have a blank canvas," said Albuquerque. "The world is completely open to them. They already have accomplished quite a lot with extremely limited resources, and I expect the future will be bright for these Kurdish women. Hopefully, the same will be true for the women in southern Iraq."

PROVIDING SOLACE AND SUPPORT TO IRAQI CITIZENS

An Iraqi man's house was destroyed by a bomb during the war. It killed his two daughters and his brother. His wife and sons were injured and still require medical care. Unsure of where to go for help, he goes to the Iraqi Assistance Center (IAC) at the Iraqi Forum, formerly known as the Baghdad Convention Center.

The IAC is run by Soldiers from the 352nd Civil Affairs Command, an Army Reserve unit from Riverdale, Maryland. Originally designed to serve members of non-governmental organizations working in Iraq, providing them with information about anything from security and road safety to humanitarian assistance flights arriving at Baghdad International Airport, the IAC now has assumed the additional role of helping Iraqi citizens find the appropriate agency or organization to provide them much needed assistance.

In many ways, the IAC has become an advocacy group for Iraqis. Employing Iraqi civilians as interpreters, the Center deals with a variety of issues — everything from Iraqis seeking compensation for damage to their cars or houses to people seeking treatment for medical problems. Iraqis also bring in information about weapon caches or individuals being sought by coalition forces. And, sometimes, people will just wander in seeking directions to various locations around Baghdad.

"There are ten Civil Military Operations Centers (CMOCs) in Baghdad to refer people to," said Luna Kamouna, an Iraqi interpreter working at the IAC. "Many of the issues people bring here can be solved by Soldiers at those CMOCs, who are members of tactical civil affairs units that specialize in handling neighborhood problems."

One of the goals of the IAC is to prevent having people shuffled from one agency to another.

"Time is an important factor in solving these problems," said Capt. Cameron Sellers, a humanitarian flight operations officer with the 352nd. "Our duty is to help other organizations by making sure the right people get to the right places."

Eventually, the members of the 352nd will transfer control for these activities over to the Iraqis because they recognize the importance of having Iraqi citizens help their own countrymen.

"Whatever the new Iraqi government looks like, the Iraqi people must have an advocacy group. And it must be run by its own people to create a greater sense of solidarity," added Sellars. "This Center will be the conduit for helping promote solidarity and the humane treatment of Iraqi citizens by its new government."

Staff Sgt. Albert Berlo, a Civil Affairs Specialist with the 352nd Civil Affairs Command, an Army Reserve unit from Riverdale, Md., assists members of non-governmental organizations at the Iraqi Assistance Center located in the Iraqi Forum in Baghdad.

PHOTO: SPEC. RYAN SMITH, 372ND MPAD

ASSESSING HOSPITALS IN BAGHDAD

Public health teams from the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade from Riverdale, Maryland, and the 490th Civil Affairs Battalion from Abilene, Texas, headed to the Al Thawra district in Baghdad recently to assess the condition of local hospitals. The teams

Proud parents display their newborns at the Al Thawra Pediatric and Maternity Hospital in Baghdad.

PHOTOS: SPEC. CHAD D. WILKERSON, 372ND MPAD

PHOTO: SPEC. CHAD D. WILKERSON, 372ND MPAD

Col. Mohamed Ibraheim (right), Public Health Team Chief for the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, an Army Reserve unit from Riverdale, Md., along with a local physician, look in on a premature newborn in an Al Thawra hospital incubator during assessments being conducted on local area hospitals.

visited two pediatric and maternity hospitals, speaking with hospital directors and questioning hospital personnel on conditions in the facilities and measures to improve their operation.

"A major part of solving the problem is identifying the problem," said Maj. John Padgett, chief of the public health team for the 490th. "It takes time to identify the problems and, once determined, how to address them."

For now, the focus of the assessments is on how to restore reasonable health care standards in Baghdad.

"We are focusing our major efforts on four areas," said Col. Mohamed S. Ibraheim of the 354th and public health coordinator for the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center (HACC) in Baghdad. "The first is security, followed by medical supplies and distribution, power availability, and facility integrity."

So far, the assessments have gone better than anticipated. According to Ibraheim, the hospitals are providing a satisfactory level of care to their patients, and the staff and patients are glad to see coalition forces taking an interest in their community.

To date, 35 of the 36 major hospitals in Baghdad have been assessed, and coalition forces have been able to elevate most of those to a "green" level of effectiveness.

"We have some work to do yet," added Ibraheim. "However, every day, we are making great strides toward getting our mission accomplished."

PHOTO: SPEC. ANTHONY K. REINOSO, 372ND MPAD

Sfc. Gordon Pry, a Psychological Operations Specialist with the 346th Psychological Operations Company, an Army Reserve unit from Columbus, Ohio, rides alongside an Iraqi worker on a forklift being used to load 500-pound rolls of high-grade paper onto flatbed trucks for transport to a central clearing area.

TURNING AN EYESORE INTO A CASH COW

Mention the word "detail" to a Soldier and he may cringe at the thought of having to take on some disgusting job that no one else wants to do. But not all details need to be laborious. Often, they can result in a lot of good. Just ask Sfc. Gordon Pry and Spec. David Hicks, psychological operations specialists with the 346th Psychological Operations Company, an Army Reserve unit from Columbus, Ohio.

Recently, Pry and Hicks were assigned to supervise local Iraqis as they removed 500-pound rolls of high-grade paper found in a warehouse that the V Corps motor pool wanted relocated to Camp Victory near Baghdad International Airport. During their assignment, Pry and Hicks began their days having breakfast with Iraqi locals, sharing food brought in by the Iraqis to the work location in a U.S. compound.

After breakfast, the Iraqi locals would use two small forklifts to load the rolls of paper onto several flatbed tractor-trailers for transport. Eventually, the paper would be sold under contract by Iraqis, who would then return a percentage of the sales amount to the 346th. That money would be used by the 346th to establish new businesses, and to provide supplies to and fund restoration costs for local schools.

"Even though the Saddam Hussein regime had confiscated the paper, it actually belongs to the Iraqi people. So, we're just giving it back to its rightful owners," said Pry, who noted that the removal of the paper also was providing temporary employment for several members of the local population.

"We have a bunch of missions going on here," added Pry. "We have been using the printing press at the Al Iraq Al Yoom [a local newspaper] to produce a newspaper and a back-to-school magazine, which is designed to encourage children to go back to school and get off the streets."

The 346th also purchases more than 100,000 copies of the Al Iraq Al Yoom newspaper (a mostly Arabic paper) each week to distribute throughout the country free of charge. Various Army Reserve public affairs units in the area provide information, and news articles and photographs to the 346th for use in the newspaper.

"There has been a dearth of information in Iraq for a long time. And what little information was available came at high cost. Locals told us that the Saddam Hussein regime charged between 500 to 1,000 dinars per newspaper copy, and that most Iraqis could not afford the cost. That was what prompted us to start this newspaper campaign," said Pry. "It's very important that we win over the hearts and minds of the people."

So, according to Pry and Hicks, this detail has been far from laborious. Instead, it has become much more than the sum of its parts.

"The relationships we've developed in getting this project underway have been friendly and heartwarming. Each morning, the Iraqis break bread with us, sharing not only their melon wedges but also a little bit of themselves," said Hicks. "This has been an important step forward in gaining trust between our two countries."

TEACHING IRAQI CANINE TRAINERS IN BAGHDAD

If you listen closely enough, you can hear the howls of several small animals emanating from inside an old jailhouse just behind a police station in downtown Baghdad. It's as if the animals are recalling the inhumane torture that once took place behind the prison's steel doors in rooms the size of walk-in closets.

Now, those cells, sporting fresh coats of paint, are home to the new Iraqi canine corps — the latest recruits in the battle on terror. And Sgt. Emily Frasca, a police academy instructor with the 382nd Military Police (MP) Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from San Diego, California, is helping jumpstart the program.

Attached to the 18th MP Brigade in Iraq and part of Task Force 1st Armored Division, Frasca and the other Soldiers in her unit were teaching classes at the police academy in Baghdad when someone asked her to help with the canine unit. She jumped at the opportunity.

"I love working with dogs," said Frasca. "So, when they offered me the chance to be the liaison for the trainers and to coordinate with the 18th MP Brigade to get equipment for them, I saw an opportunity to share what I know and what I've learned."

The canine unit is progressing quickly. The Iraqi trainers are learning new methods of training, and the dogs are multiplying. One of the German shepherds recently gave birth to five pups. But that wasn't always the case.

Before the war, the canine unit was housed outside of Baghdad, where the trainers received very little support. They lacked the money to buy equipment and training manuals, and to have the dogs vaccinated. Eventually they became ineffective.

"The trainers were cut off from all support," added Frasca. "They ended up inbreeding the dogs and using outdated methods to train them. Ultimately, they spent considerable time trying to train dogs that were not capable of becoming police dogs, and their methods met with little success."

An Iraqi canine trainer coaches Hawon, a German Shepherd police dog, as they search for TNT hidden in the wheel well of a new Iraqi police car during a training exercise at a police station in Baghdad.

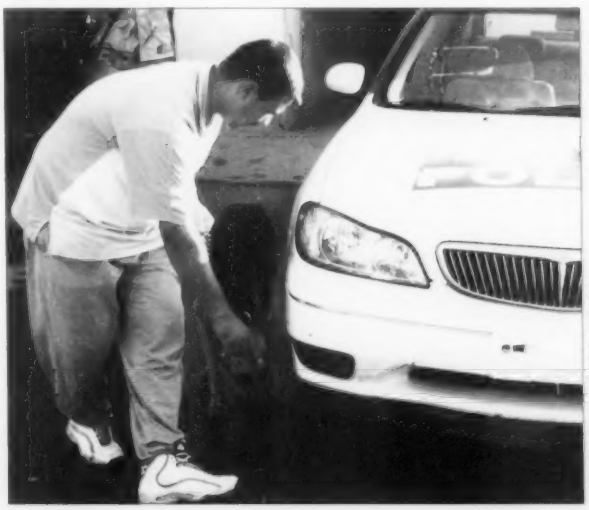


PHOTO: SGT. MARK S. RICKERT, 372ND MPAD

Iraqi veterans stand in line for security screening on their way to applying for and receiving their military pay.

After the coalition forces became involved with the Baghdad police force, it was decided to bring the canine unit back into Baghdad. They cleaned out one of the old prison facilities and transformed it into a kennel.

"When I saw this old torture camp, I saw the potential for a kennel," added Frasca. "So, we began work converting it into a 13-room kennel, adding an office in the back and a room for trainers to stay overnight in order to protect the dogs."

Aside from coaching the trainers on new methods of training, Frasca also helps assess the animals. Based on her assessments, the dogs are assigned specific job training, such as bomb detection, attack or narcotics.

Frasca says the dogs also are learning a new language. Because Frasca teaches in English, the Iraqi trainers bark English commands to their canines. This gives both the trainers and their dogs a kind of coded language.

"Iraqi police officers are able to communicate with their dogs without the Iraqi locals understanding," said Frasca. "In some situations, this can give them the upper hand."

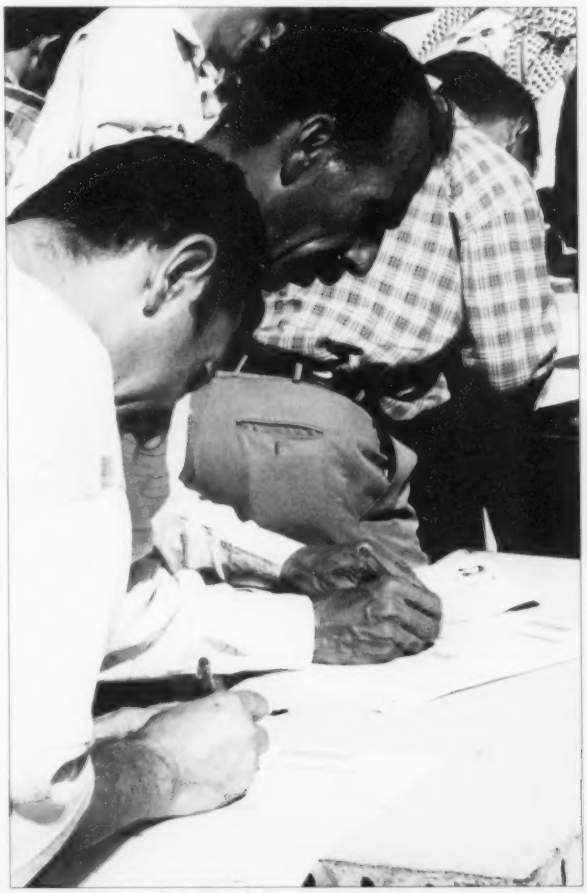
PAYING IRAQI EX-MILITARY

Hundreds of Iraqi ex-military lined up outside a warehouse in downtown Baghdad in order to receive their long-awaited paychecks. U.S. Soldiers, with assistance from the Coalition Provisional Authority, the U.S.-led interim administration of Iraq, registered each of the former Iraqi soldiers who would be paid prior to handing them the promised paychecks.

Lt. Col. Fareed Betros, the senior Middle East advisor for the Ministry of National Security and Defense, and an Army Reserve Soldier from Washington, D.C., designed and coordinated the plan to pay Iraq's ex-military in seven different cities throughout the country.

"We are paying a different rank every day. For example, today we are paying captains," said Betros. "No one is admitted without an ID card, and we screen everyone for security."

Iraqi ex-soldiers fill out personal information and security forms, including a statement dissolving any ties with the Baath Party, as they apply for their military pay.



PHOTOS THIS PAGE: SPEC. CHAD D. WILKERSON, 372ND MPAD

At the processing tent, each service member fills out a personal information form. They also are required to sign a statement promising no further affiliation with the former regime's Baath Party. They receive their pay, which comes from frozen Iraqi government funds, after all of their paperwork has been thoroughly scrutinized.

"We have 40 desks where each soldier is paid according to his rank," said Betros. "We have paid more than 20,000 service members in short order, and we are estimating between 77,000 and 100,000 people will be paid in Baghdad."

"The unemployment rate in Baghdad remains high. We hope that, by paying these ex-soldiers, some of them will be able to get back on their feet under the new government administration. There already are reports of fewer demonstrations and protests," said Lt. Col. Will G. Merrill, action officer with the Ministry of National Security and Defense, and an Army Reserve Soldier from Fort Riley, Kansas.

"These soldiers did what we asked them to do. They threw down their weapons and refused to fight for Saddam Hussein. That saved a lot of lives on both sides of the fence," added Merrill. "They served honorably, and now their country has an opportunity to take care of them."

According to Betros, ex-service members in Saddam Hussein's regime who do not fall into the category of honorable service — the Fedayeen Saddam, the Special Republican Guard, and certain intelligence ministry personnel — are not being included on the pay rosters.

Both Betros and Merrill said they believe the military pay missions have been well received.

"I think the Iraqi people are starting to see that we are going to honor our word, and give them a good start. We are going to fix what is broken," Merrill said.

MAKING THE STREETS SAFER

The 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, an Army Reserve unit from Riverdale, Maryland, is working to make Baghdad city streets a safer place to travel.

Lt. Col. Joe Wunderlich, transportation officer for the public facilities team from the 354th, has been working with Mujahid Shariff, director general for projects for the city of Baghdad, in order to identify and repair the streets of Baghdad, a city of five million people.

"The projects we have been working on were identified by the mayor of Baghdad as being key to the city's overall transportation infrastructure," said Wunderlich. "We are

Iraqi road workers lay down a few coats of paint on a downtown curb as part of Baghdad's road restoration efforts.

PHOTOS THIS PAGE: SPEC. CHAD D. WILKERSON, 372ND MPAD

Lt. Col. Joe Wunderlich, a transportation officer with the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, an Army Reserve unit from Riverdale, Md., discusses the progress of repair work to a city median damaged by armored military vehicles in Baghdad City.

repairing or replacing hundreds of guardrails, traffic lights and curb stands."

Although some of the work Wunderlich and his team have been overseeing was occasioned by damages sustained during the conflict, many of the problems existed prior to the war.

"Along the road to Baquba, there was a one- to two-meter falloff that we fixed for the safety of both the Iraqi people and the coalition forces that use that highway," added Wunderlich. "Many of these kinds of problems are decades-old."

In addition to making the streets safe for travel by the Iraqi people and the coalition forces, the 354th also is attempting to improve the "traffic-ability" in Baghdad. This is being done by moving vendors to appropriate locations — out of the flow of traffic — and by getting traffic control points up and running to ensure people obey traffic laws.

"There is a comprehensive traffic study being done right now," said Wunderlich. "Although Baghdad has fallen prey to neglect, I expect to see the city become a thriving, metropolitan, world-class city in the years to come."

HELPING THE DISABLED

During Saddam Hussein's reign, the government turned a blind eye toward its disabled citizens. The handicapped in Iraq had no disability pay or accommodations, and no parking spaces or ramps along the walkways. Now, all of that is changing as Iraqis are being given the freedom to express themselves.

One group making its desires known is the Iraqi Handicapped Society, whose goal is to pave the way for the disabled citizens of Iraq. And, with the help of the members of the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, an Army Reserve unit from Riverdale, Maryland, they are making great strides.

"We act as the center of gravity for these groups," said Maj. Vincent T. Cooper of the 354th, who acts as a liaison between international relief organizations, the coalition forces, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), and the Iraqi civilian government. "Once an issue is raised, we more or less act as the broker for getting a response."

"We helped the Iraqi Handicapped Society become major players by hooking them up with organizations that could offer help," he added. "So far, they are receiving support from the U.S. Agency for International Development and other non-governmental organizations that can provide such things as food, medicine and shelter."

The Iraqi Handicapped Society is unique in that it was formed by a handful of determined citizens working to get relief for all handicapped Iraqis regardless of race, religion, sex or age.

"We started this organization because we are handicapped and because the former regime gave us no benefits," said Moafak Tawfek, Vice President of the Iraqi Handicapped Society. "We had to take care of ourselves."

"We helped the Iraqi Handicapped Society become major players by hooking them up with organizations that could offer help."

The Iraqi Handicapped Society has three primary functions. First, they plan to lobby the new Iraqi government to establish new comprehensive laws protecting the rights of the disabled and bringing attention to their special needs.

Second, working with international and non-governmental organizations, it plans to bring relief, such as medicine, food and medical aids, such as wheel chairs and walking sticks, to the country's disabled.

Finally, the Society is working to put together job training for the handicapped. They plan to send Iraqis to special schools where they can learn a trade. From there, they want to open a co-op shopping center, providing jobs for their membership.

"We want our organization to grow, and we need help from the community," said Mothana Obaida, President of the Iraqi Handicapped Society. "We want to ensure greater freedom for the disabled and share that freedom with Iraq."

MAKING DOGWOOD A BETTER PLACE FOR IRAQIS AND SOLDIERS

Under extreme wind conditions and with sand flying about relentlessly over the broad horizon, six engineers with B Company, 389th Engineer Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Decorah, Iowa, are working diligently to transfer a useless desert plot into a fully operational helicopter landing pad for a nearby combat support field hospital.

Army Reserve Soldiers, Spec. David Ferkingstand from Whitewater Wisc., and Spec. Natasha Holtgrewe from Swansea Ill., both assigned to B Company, 389th Engineer Battalion based in Decorah, Iowa, work together to hammer a rod to secure the cement foundation for a helicopter landing pad at Forward Logistics Base Dogwood located southwest of Baghdad.

Deployed since May, members of the 389th have been working nonstop designing and erecting guard towers and other buildings throughout Forward Logistics Base Dogwood — a support operations center located southwest of Baghdad that has become home to more than 4,000 Soldiers.

"We constantly are working on construction projects, improving both the living and working conditions for Dogwood's population," said Spec. David Ferkingstad from Whitewater, Wisconsin. "This is our second helicopter pad."

"We are giving the Soldiers, as well as the Iraqi people here, a better way of life. I also know we are doing the right thing by helping the Iraqi people," he added.

Spec. Natasha Holtgrewe from Swansea, Illinois, also assigned to the 389th, agrees, although she says that the extreme conditions often can turn up the heat on their frustration.

"These extreme temperatures [more than 110 degrees on many days] make it difficult to work with concrete," said Swansea. "It creates cracks in our projects, and there is nothing we can do about it. It's frustrating because people are going to see our work. They are going to know we did it, and we want things to be perfect — without flaws. It's what being in an engineering unit is all about."

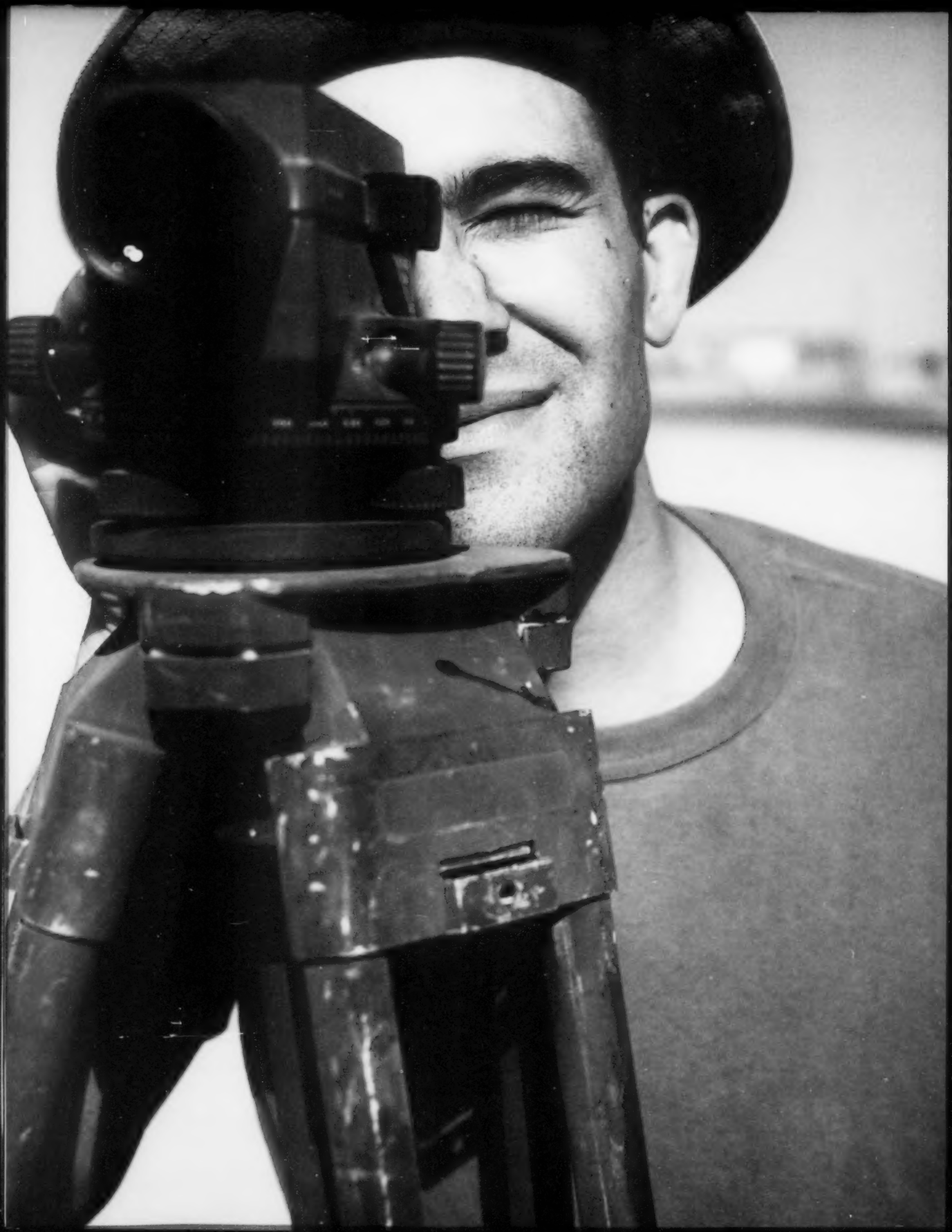
Although the 389th does not expect to receive much notice or fanfare for their work, Sgt. Jared Sheridan, an electrician from Decorah, said it was extremely rewarding to see other Soldiers enjoying the fruits of their labors.

PHOTOS THIS SPREAD: SGT. MARK BELL, 372ND MPAD

"It's a great feeling when people appreciate what you have accomplished," he said. "The best part about our job is improving the quality of life for Soldiers and the local Iraqi residents here."

[Left] An Army Reserve Soldier assigned to B Company, 389th Engineer Battalion, operates a grader to level the ground before building a helicopter landing pad at Forward Logistics Base Dogwood.

[Right] Army Reserve Sgt. Jared Sheridan, assigned to B Company, 389th Engineer Battalion, uses a level as part of the work to build a helicopter landing pad at Forward Logistics Base Dogwood.



GIVING A VOICE TO THE PEOPLE

At a recent meeting of the Al Anbar branch of the Iraqi Media Network (IMN), members of Iraq's fourth estate (the media) were on hand to decide who would play what role as the first free press in Iraq is established. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 350th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment from Indianapolis, Indiana, were in attendance to provide assistance, both monetary and experience-based.

Staff Sgt. Douglas Salewsky of the 350th, who worked with the military as well as members of the various non-governmental organizations to coordinate most of the funding for the press in the Al Anbar region, stressed the importance of having a truly free press to the members of the IMN.

"You are part of a free press and, as a result, cannot allow your work to be censored — either by internal or external agencies. If you think that the coalition forces have done something wrong, you need to report it. If you think there is something that the people need to know, you need to report it. Your responsibility is to ensure that the truth is reported accurately," he told the members of the IMN.

Many audience members were clearly pleased with what they were hearing.

"I am thrilled by what I am hearing. Finally, we will have control of our media," said Majid Abdel Hameed, a member of Al Anbar's newly formed newspaper agency.

Prior to the war, most media agencies were turned into propaganda machines under the close supervision of the Saddam Hussein regime. They were told what to report, how to report it, and had very little creative or other input into television, radio or print news. The formation of the Iraqi Free Press is working to give a voice to the people of Iraq who have been silenced for so long.

"We are doing a great job here. I just hope that they will be allowed to continue with their work once we are gone," added Salewsky.

The meeting concluded after department heads were named, and other titles and responsibilities were assigned. In the coming months, the Al Anbar IMN branch will need to locate additional funding and procure facilities, as well as experience all of the growing pains associated with building a new organization from scratch.

HELPING WITH FOOD DISTRIBUTION

In the early 1990s, after the first Gulf War ended, the Iraqi food distribution system was started. With the arrival of the World Food Program in 1996, which became involved to help monitor the process, the system increased its efficiency, feeding nearly 60 percent of Iraq's population. The rest of the Iraqi population did not need to participate in the program — either because they were wealthy or because they were farmers and grew their own food.

Soldiers with the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, an Army Reserve unit from Riverdale, Md., and Iraqi warehouse managers assess food stocks.

PHOTOS: SGT. MARK S. RICKERT, 372ND MPAD

Spec. Robert O. Martin, a Civil Affairs Specialist with the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, helps to unload a truck at a food distribution warehouse in Baghdad.

Recent combat operations, however, nearly derailed the system. Conflicts disrupted the flow of food, money and imports causing even more people than ever before to seek outside assistance for food.

With nearly an entire country facing extreme hunger, the Soldiers of the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, an Army Reserve unit from Riverdale, Maryland, stepped in to rebuild and strengthen the system. Now, roughly 95 percent of the Iraqi people are receiving food as a result of their efforts.

The role of the 354th has evolved over time. When they first entered Baghdad, they made sure that everyone who needed food received it.

"What we did initially was to make sure the system was functioning properly," said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) David Jones, a civil affairs officer with the 354th. "We provided monitoring in the same way that the World Food Program was providing that service, but with a military point of view. We made sure every single person got fed."

Once the system was functioning properly, however, the 354th turned their attention toward refining the system. Focus shifted to civil affairs and pay problems.

"We no longer are worried about starving people," said 1st Lt. A. Heather Coyne, a civil affairs officer also with the 354th. "Now, we are worried about the accountability of the Ministry of Trade to the Iraqi citizens."

According to Coyne, the former Iraqi regime had limited involvement with food distribution, and the citizens were unable to voice their complaints. Now, with the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime, the Iraqi citizens want a voice and a role in the process.

"The citizens have complaints, such as costs, transportation of food, and lack of salaries," added Coyne. "Those complaints need to have a channel open to the government. Right now, we are creating an advisory council so that people can place their complaints before the Ministry of Trade."

According to Jones, the Soldiers with the 354th hope to turn the food distribution system over to the Ministry of Trade and the World Food Program within the next few months.

"That's where it belongs," added Jones. "This should be an Iraqi program, with the Iraqi people taking responsibility for themselves and their own needs."

PHOTO: SPEC. ANTHONY K. REINOSO, 372ND MPAD

Capt. Stacey Simms, Special Functions team chief assigned to the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserve Unit from Greensboro, N.C., and Dr. Kaydar al Chalaei, Director of the Spinal Injury Center in Baghdad, discuss plans to renovate the facility.

RESTORING AND RE-SUPPLYING IRAQ'S SPINAL INJURY CENTER

One top priority for the members of the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Greensboro, North Carolina, has been to restore and re-supply the Spinal Injury Center building in Baghdad. Formerly run by Iraq's Ministry of Defense, the Center previously was used primarily by Iraqi military personnel to stockpile caches of uniforms, helmets and gas masks. Now, it is being converted to handle emergencies and to provide long-term rehabilitation to the approximate 70 Iraqi patients currently being housed in its few wards sanitary enough to provide proper care.

Due to post-war looting and vandalism, a great deal of equipment was either stolen from the facility or destroyed. More than half the Center is still covered with dust and debris. And, according to Dr. Kaydar Al Chalaei, director of the Center, while the facility has been operational for more than 20 years, no piece of equipment ever was allowed to be discarded, sold or donated, creating an extremely dangerous environment both outside and within. Junky, outdated equipment litters almost every square inch of space, while most of the useful equipment, such as computers, air conditioning units, wheelchairs, and beds have been removed.

"I am short of beds inside the wards. And the wards in use are below sanitary standards," said Chalaei. "While some wards are sanitary, useless medical equipment occupies most of that space. What this means is that patients are being confined to only a handful of rooms and there is overcrowding."

PHOTO: SPEC. ANTHONY K. REINOSO, 372ND MPAD

An Iraqi intern demonstrates how a prosthetic hand works at the Spinal Injury Center in Baghdad.

PHOTO: SGT. MARK S. RICKERT, 372ND MPAD

Students demonstrate their EMS skills prior to their first phase EMS graduation ceremony at the Iraqi Forum Building in Baghdad.

"They are lacking an awful lot right now," said Capt. Stacey Simms, special functions team chief assigned to the 422nd and a resident of Rochester, New York. "The pediatric ward is loaded with old equipment, old files and rubbish."

So far, the 422nd has managed to restore six wards. Once sanitized, Chalaei plans to use those wards to start a pediatric spinal care unit, an intensive care unit, a rehabilitation clinic, and a neurology clinic. The 422nd also is working on getting lecture halls and classrooms repaired to allow the Center to provide continuing training to its interns and resident doctors.

"One of our next priorities is to conduct a big clean-up project that will improve the quality of life for the patients here," added Simms. "We plan to put in two separate requests — one for permanent cleaners and one for a temporary crew. The temporary crew would be used for trash removal. No one should have to endure conditions like this."

INTRODUCING NEW EMS AND PARAMEDIC TRAINING IN IRAQ

In a recent ceremony at the Iraqi Forum building in Baghdad, 31 Iraqis selected by the Ministry of Health were awarded certificates for completing the first of three emergency medical services (EMS) courses. Maj. John Kerstetter, an EMS medical doctor with the 109th Medical Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Iowa City, Iowa, and the medical integration officer with Coalition Joint Task Force 7 (CJTF-7), rallied the support of CJTF-7 and the Ministry of Health to make these courses available to the Iraqi people.

According to Kerstetter, creating a first response team in Baghdad was critical because Iraq currently does not have an efficient telecommunications system and, as a result, emergency response times often can be extremely slow.

"In the old days, if a person were injured, an ambulance service might pick them up and take them to a hospital," said Kerstetter. "However, there would be no first aid or treatment involved. The purpose of this course is to train the people to take medicine to the people when they need it, whether that be to the home or out on the roadways."

"Now the people are qualified to assess and treat an injured person," said Dr. Aurora Merovci, an emergency room doctor from Kosovo who came to Baghdad to help teach the classes. "This course enables students to offer immediate treatment and to save lives."

Labeled as a "First Responder Course," the first phase of the EMS training is a broad introduction to the EMS system. During the two-week course, students learn first aid basics, such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and physical trauma and shock treatment.

To kick off the training courses, the Ministry of Health hand-selected 31 students from more than 100 applicants for the EMS training courses. According to Kerstetter, the participants were selected based on their educational backgrounds.

"Most of the students are educated. Some are doctors, while others are veterinarians and engineers," said Kerstetter. "All of them recognize that this is something new and beneficial for Iraq."

PHOTO: SGT. MARK S. RICKERT, 372ND MPAD

Dr. Aurora Mervoci, an EMS instructor, oversees student demonstrations during graduation ceremonies recently held in Baghdad.

Students who excelled in the First Responder Course will move on to phase two, a five-week course focused on more advanced techniques, clinical observation, administration of intravenous medications, and evaluation of electrocardiograms. The third and final course is the advanced pre-hospital support phase, which will last six months. After successfully completing that phase, the students will become certified paramedics.

The goal is to certify more than 400 students. Although they will not have an immediate position within a hospital, the formal training will offer them opportunities down the road.

"This is a brand new EMS system and a new kind of medical care for Iraq," added Kerstetter. "Eventually, jobs will be created for all these people. There are no jobs now because this is all brand new. However, when the opportunities present themselves, we want these people to be able to say, 'Here I am. I am qualified to work in your hospital.'"

GETTING THE WORD OUT

An Iraqi man in a neighborhood on the outskirts of southern Baghdad swears that nobody in his community will cooperate with coalition forces. He says the people are afraid that the Fedayeen (Saddam Hussein's paramilitary force) will kill them in the night if they do.

Staff Sgt. Ronald R. Calimlim, team chief for Tactical Psychological Operation Team 1412, 301st Psychological Operations Company, an Army Reserve unit from San Diego, California, assures the man that the Soldiers of Task Force Falcon are weeding out the former regime loyalists daily. However, they need the Iraqi people's help to identify those responsible for attacks against its Soldiers and against the people of Iraq.

On this particular day, Calimlim and the other members of the 301st are distributing flyers and conducting loudspeaker operations in the southern part of Al Rashid, a district in Baghdad. Calimlim and his team are attached to the 82nd Airborne Division's Airborne Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, Task Force 1st Armored Division.

Using translators and loudspeakers to broadcast in neighborhoods and communities, as well as newsletters, stickers and leaflets, the psychological operation team is working to help the Iraqi people understand the role of the coalition and the new Iraqi government.

"Once the people see former regime loyalists being rooted out at traffic control points, and daily search operations and patrols, the people will feel safer and realize that the former regime is gone forever," said Calimlim. "Then the people will be more forthcoming with information."

Calimlim's team currently is calling for citizens to help protect coalition forces and Iraqi interests by providing information leading to the capture of individuals suspected of using improvised explosive devices to attack soldiers. While the majority of Iraqis are cooperating, some remain silent.

"For those people who are neutral about the coalition, we try to encourage them to help us by letting them know what we're planning to do in the future," said Capt. Brian J. Duckworth, detachment commander for the 301st. "We tell those who do not support us that we know the former regime will never again play a significant role in the government here. Therefore, if they want to be a part of the future of Iraq, they need to get on board."

According to Duckworth, the response has been very positive. The Iraqi people are beginning to understand that there are serious infrastructure problems in the country, and that the country is in a lot worse shape than Saddam Hussein would have had them believe.

"The whole idea behind psychological operations is to influence the behavior of a target audience," said Sgt. Jeremy Rouse, a psychological operation specialist with the 301st. "We are spreading coalition messages to people who, otherwise, would be unaware of what is happening around them."

In addition to the information campaign, the 301st provides regular support to the infantry units during cordon and search operations, patrols, and raids. The unit also has been used to help quell demonstrations and protests by building a rapport with civil leaders to help prevent possible violence, respond to issues, and resolve conflicts. AR

Staff. Sgt. Ronald Calimlim, Team Chief, Tactical Psychological Team 1412, 301st Psychological Operations Company, an Army Reserve Unit from San Diego, Calif., distributes handbills to residents in a local community in the Al Rashid District of Baghdad.

Sgt. Raul Alvarez, Assistant Team Chief, Tactical Psychological Team 1412, 301st Psychological Operations Company, operates a loudspeaker system calling for the people of Iraq to assist coalition forces in apprehending former regime loyalists.

PHOTOS: SGT. BRENT M. WILLIAMS, 49TH PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT (AIRBORNE), 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION, TASK FORCE 1ST ARMORED DIVISION

The Role of the 377th

THEATER SUPPORT COMMAND

Maj. Gen. David E. Kratzer
Commanding General
377th Theater Support Command
April 2003

The Only Deployable Theater Support Command in the Army

The 377th Theater Support Command, with headquarters in New Orleans, Louisiana, is one of the most complex organizations in the United States Army.

While there are three theater support commands in the Army, the 377th is the only Army Reserve theater support command and the only theater support command in the Army that is deployable. The other active duty theater support commands are the 21st Theater Support Command, which has been in Europe almost since WWII, and the 19th Theater Support Command, which is in Korea. Neither of those commands is deployable.

The job of the 377th Theater Support Command is to deploy with the Third U.S. Army under U.S. Central Command, and to provide all of the support services in Southwest Asia for the Southwest Asian Theater. Currently, the 377th directly supports Lt. Gen. McKiernan, the Commander of the Third Army, now CFLC (the Coalition Forces Land Component).

A theater support command basically is responsible for putting together the entire structure for a city wherever one is needed.

While the 377th always has had a forward headquarters in Kuwait, today it is almost at full command strength. It is a very large structure. Down Trace has eight general officer commands and 13 O6 or colonel-level commands, which make up the theater support command. In total numbers, there are slightly more than 11,000 Soldiers. Ultimately, the command will be at close to 30,000 Soldiers in number.

The command's headquarters is in Arifjan in Kuwait, but it has elements that are spread throughout the country. And, some of its support elements are servicing other areas throughout the theater under Gen. Frank's command.

What is really interesting about the 377th is that it is an Army Reserve command, as well a multi-functional command. That means we combine about one-third full-time Soldiers and about two-thirds Army Reserve Soldiers. And today, instead of having our forward command in Kuwait and our main command in New Orleans, the reverse is true. Our main command is in Kuwait and our rear command is in New Orleans.

What Does a Theater Support Command Do?

Many people ask, "What does a theater support command do?" A theater support command basically is responsible for putting together the entire structure for a city wherever one is needed. That means we supply everything from the fire and police departments to the power company, medical services, personnel operations, and the banks.

In addition, we also supply all of the transportation facilities and equipment, and report and airport operations, as well as what is referred to as "logistics over the shore." "Logistics over the shore" means we offload all of the ships at sea, bringing in all of the equipment needed by the "citizens" of our new city. It's a unique operation that we do jointly with the Army, the Navy and the Coast Guard, all working together with the Marines.

Out here in the desert, we have created a city in the sand and are responsible for a series of base camps.

The Meaning of a Deployable Command

Now, when I speak of the 377th as a deployable command, what I mean is that we have pre-positioned stocks forward. And all of those stocks have been downloaded from ships that were floating around out there in the ocean. We bring them in through the ports and move them to where they need to be.

We also move all of the people who arrive by air. We receive them and process them quickly. Then, we move them onward to where they are going to live. Not only that, we are responsible for where they live. So, all of their living conditions — sanitation and food service, for example — are our responsibility as well.

We've come a long way from the days of Desert Storm when this thing called a "support command" came into being under Gen. Pagonis. Of course, we've had certain advantages — advancements in technology and the benefits of lessons learned. However, I can recall a point during Desert Storm when we had 33,000 containers stacked up in the ports of Saudi Arabia.

No one knew what was in those containers. So, the Soldiers literally had to open each container and stick their heads into each box to determine where to send them. This

...the bottom line is that we are operating efficiently. We are moving so fast that we have managed to clear the ports each day...

took a long time and created a huge backlog for the onward movement piece of our operation. At one point, we had 24,000 Soldiers in port waiting to move forward.

That is not happening today. If you went into port today, you might find 115 containers awaiting movement. That's it. Yet this deployment, in sheer weight, rivals the deployment of WWII.

So, the bottom line is that we are operating efficiently. We are moving so fast that we have managed to clear the ports each day we have been here, as well as clear all of the Soldiers who are coming through the airport each day.

A System of Precise Engineering

The operation at the airport really is quite amazing — and quite simple. You merely walk off the airplane and scan your new ID that has a chip in it. The portable scanners are hanging out of the windows of two vehicles located at the airport. So, however long it takes you to walk by and scan your ID (like groceries at a supermarket), that's how long it takes you to process into the theater.

In addition, once the modern Soldier arrives and scans his or her card, all of his or her records — medical records blood type, finance category, all of it — immediately is captured. There are no forms to fill out and none of the in-processing to do that Soldiers who fought in earlier wars might remember.

It is a system of precise engineering that enables us to marry the right amounts of equipment to the right people at the right destinations.

Then, it's just on to a waiting bus and off to a reception tent where you receive a cup of coffee and about a 10-minute briefing. As soon as your bags are downloaded, you and your luggage are taken to your proper destination.

About two days before the ships arrive with your equipment, we bring you back in. Once you've picked up your equipment, you are free to go back and set up your camp. At that point, the NCOs can start getting their people organized and the unit can start taking care of itself.

If a ship arrives with Humvees or trucks, we only will bring the drivers back to the port. The equipment will be staged and in a line so that the Soldiers can fall in on it and move directly to their camps, where they can start pulling maintenance or doing whatever else needs to be done with it.

The containers themselves each have an RF (radio frequency) tag on them similar to the kind UPS uses. Using scanners, we know exactly what is in each container, as well as to which unit each container belongs. There could be 1,000 different parts in the container. However, all of the parts will be listed and that information can be accessed immediately.

All of this has allowed us to quickly pre-stage and move equipment. It is a system of precise engineering that enables us to marry the right amounts of equipment to the right people at the right destinations.

In the last few months alone, we have moved 150,000 people into this operation. We have downloaded more than 100 ships. As a matter of fact, when the 101st Airborne came in, we downloaded our 101st ship. That's a tremendous feat — more than 100 ships in two months.

... the real power comes from working together and thinking about what has to be done instead of about who gets the credit or who does the work.

Tapping the Real Power That Comes from Working Together

The real heroes in all of this are the Soldiers — and not just the Army Reserve or active Soldiers, or even the civilians or the contractors here. It's the complete team that makes up today's modern military.

It's the Soldiers working in close coordination with the Marine Corps. We have Soldiers driving Marine Corps vehicles. We have contracts that were let by the Marines for the host nation — truck assets they didn't need for a couple of days so they gave them to the Army.

All of this has caused a tremendous awakening — a realization that the real power comes from working together and thinking about what has to be done instead of about who gets the credit or who does the work.

The Army Reserve Soldiers here represent about 60 percent of that force — maybe even 65 percent. I've met Army Reserve Soldiers here who left the Army quite a while ago but, after the terrorist attack of 9/11, decided they wanted to do something for their country. So, they rejoined.

I've met Vietnam veterans here who look like pretty old sergeants and who are wearing the combat infantry soldier's badge and patches from units that saw service over there. They all tell you they are here to serve.

You have young Soldiers who have interrupted their college careers to serve. And you have single parents who are here and have managed their lives and done all the things necessary in order to be here. All of them know exactly why they are here.

A big part of the strength of the Army Reserve is the civilian skills the Army Reserve Soldiers bring with them to something like this.

The Army Reserve Soldiers want to do this, and then they want to go home and get on with their lives. But they are proud to be here. They tell me that every day. I really think that says something about the strength of our country and the commitment of our people.

THE STRENGTH OF THE ARMY RESERVE

A big part of the strength of the Army Reserve is the civilian skills the Army Reserve Soldiers bring with them to something like this.

For example, we were setting up a huge distribution center here — similar to a huge Wal-Mart distribution center — with shipping, receiving and central supply. We were trying to do it very quickly and very efficiently.

One day, a young E4, a specialist, walked up to one of my colonels and said, "I wonder if you would think about this. Last night I wrote a program and I think, if we follow this program, we will be able to set up all of these containers out here and get everything in a line. We can have classes of supplies set up here, have shipping over there, and have receiving over there."

The colonel said, "That's pretty good. Let me look at this." And it was incredible. When my colonel asked the E4 how he learned to do this, he said he had just graduated from MIT and hoped to work in this field one day.

Imagine that. We have an MIT graduate wearing a rank that most Active component guys would never think had that kind of job skill. And we have privates in the Army Reserve who have PhDs, as well as all of the medical providers here as part of our theater support command. There are doctors, nurses, veterinarians, and preventive medical specialists, and they are all Army Reserve Soldiers. We simply could not do without them.

In addition, we have just about all of the military police (MP) assets as well. And, interestingly enough, the military police seem to be Army Reserve Soldiers who are from New York.

We also have the 336th Finance Command, which will be responsible for an awesome amount of money because they will be doing the banking business for the entire operation. We expect it will run into the billions of dollars, and we will need to do a complete accounting when we are done.

Then there is the 335th Personnel Command. They are responsible for maintaining the records for all of the personnel in this theater. And the 143rd Transportation Command out of Orlando, Florida, is here taking care of all of the seaport operations and all of the transportation assets within this theater.

From Anniston, Alabama, we have the 3rd Transportation Movement Control Command. They are like traffic cops in that they keep all of the trucks and tanks and other transportation equipment moving.

And we have the area support groups, which really are the building blocks of the theater support command. We have one Active duty command, the 43rd from Ft. Carson, Colorado, and one from North Carolina, the 171st. These are the people who provide life support. They run the warehouses that keep track of all the supplies and equipment, as well as run maintenance for everything.

We're here for one reason and one reason alone. To take care of that Soldier who is in that foxhole or on the front line.

Finally, there is the 49th Quartermaster Group from Ft. Lee, Virginia, which is an Active component group — the only one the Army has — and also part of this command. Their role is to provide the fuel and water. And the 7th Transportation Group, the Army's only Active duty transportation group, is working for the 143rd Army Reserve Transportation Command here.

Challenging and Rewarding

It really is a challenge to care for so many people within this environment. Let's take the issue of mail, for example.

We run the post office for this whole operation. The other day, we brought in more than 200,000 pounds of mail, and we processed it and moved it in one day. This is extremely difficult because our customers keep moving.

It would be the same if everyone back in the United States who had a post office box decided to move their box every day just to see if the post office could find them. The challenge is getting the mail to the Soldier wherever he or she is.

Then we have the fuel tanker trucks here — 5,000 to 7,500 gallon tanker trucks. We are responsible for uploading the fuel and taking it down the road. In addition, we've had to lay some fuel pipe.

Now, you might ask, "Given all of these challenges, why are you here?" Well, we're here for one reason and one reason alone. To take care of that Soldier who is in that foxhole or on the front line. If you keep that goal in mind, everything else falls into place.

So, we're doing everything we can to make the best quality of life for our military forces out here. And most of the people around here are pretty amazed that we've managed to build this kind of permanent facility here.

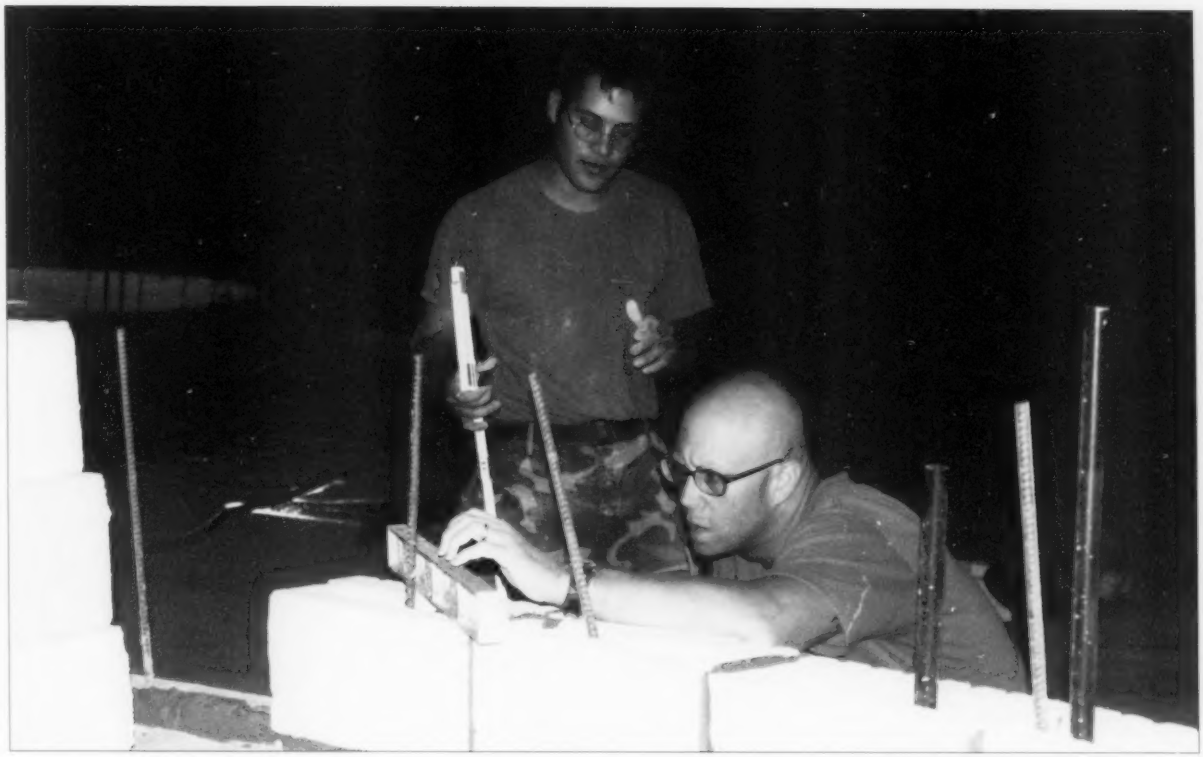
There's a Burger King, a pizza operation, and a cappuccino operation here, as well as a Chinese restaurant. And, of course, we've got the traditional facilities — Army mess halls and tent living quarters. But along with that, we've also got a huge Armed Forces Examining and Entrance Station (AFEES) operation going on so that Soldiers are able to go in and buy comfort items.

And, if you went to the forward camps in the northern part of Kuwait, you would find that the Soldiers have showers, as well as an AFEES operation. They're getting three good, solid meals a day.

We have been preparing for a long time to do the best job we can to support the Third Army and their role and mission. I have Soldiers here who literally have been working with the Third Army for almost ten years now. So, I feel pretty comfortable that we know what we are doing.

It's a huge job, but it's also very rewarding. Part of the wisdom of doing this job is knowing what you don't know. We work every day on the parts that are new, and a lot of that has to do with technology. We're trying to apply best business practices. So, we're trying to change the way we do business. And a lot of that has to do with Army transformation as laid out by the Chief.

We're living it here. We have Marines and Soldiers working side by side. The Navy is sitting about 20 feet from us right here. So, this is very much a joint endeavor.



I think every Soldier here — from the ones who have been here a while to the newest arrivals — believes it is a real challenge and privilege to be here.

We have not brought in all of the people the theater could support. But we've found that, if we work intelligently, we can probably use a smaller force and be much more powerful. So, that's what this is really about.

I think every Soldier here — from the ones who have been here a while to the newest arrivals — believes it is a real challenge and privilege to be here. It's something we all take very seriously. And we try to be as professional as we possibly can in our duties here.

I would defy anybody to look out today at this command center where there are about 400 people working and pick out the 250 to 300 Soldiers who are members of the Army Reserve. We are the same. Within a week of arriving, I think everyone forgets who's who. I don't think we even see who's a Marine and who's a Soldier any more. It's really a matter of seeing who has the information and who can make things work.

A lot of people ask, "Why Iraq and why now?" I think, when it's over, the truth will come out and people will understand why we are here. And it's both challenging and rewarding. AR

People in Focus

DON'T LET THEM PULL THE U.N. OUT

As soon as he could pick himself up off the floor of his room and remove the shard of glass embedded in his right leg, 1st Sgt. William von Zehle, serving with the Army Reserve's 411th Civil Affairs Battalion from Danbury, Connecticut, and working with nongovernmental organizations in Iraq, rushed toward the explosion. As the 52-year old retired fire chief from Wilton, Connecticut, surveyed the rubble and carnage, a man in a blue U.N. baseball cap approached saying, "We have two people trapped! Sergio and Gil are trapped!" The names meant nothing to von Zehle, but he went to help anyway.

Sergio was alive, conscious and in excruciating pain. For the next three hours, von Zehle worked to set him free. He had no rope, bucket, flashlight or any of the other equipment that could be found on his fire truck back in Connecticut. However, that did not deter von Zehle.

As von Zehle worked, the two men talked. At the time, von Zehle did not realize he was listening to the last words of the U.N. special representative, Sergio Vieira de Mello. The following day, when he learned who the man was, von Zehle jotted down Vieira de Mello's words from memory.

In a later interview, von Zehle would not say what the two men talked about. He said it was "personal." But at a ceremony at Baghdad's airport, where the diplomat's body was placed on an airplane to be returned to his native Brazil, one of Vieira de Mello's colleagues gave voice to one of the utterances that von Zehle had recorded.

"Don't let them pull the U.N. out of Iraq. Don't let them fail this mission," Benon V. Sevan, the head of Iraq's U.S.-administered oil-for-food program, quoted Vieira de Mello as saying to von Zehle.

The Blast

Around 4:30 p.m. on August 19, 2003, von Zehle was in his room at the Civilian Military Operations Center, a squat building about 100 yards from the U.N.'s offices at the Canal Hotel. No one was allowed out of the building without protective gear, so von Zehle was putting on his flak vest and beige, cloth-covered helmet as he got ready to leave for a meeting. Then he felt the blast.

The next thing he knew, von Zehle said he was "lying across the room." The windows had been blown out and, as he stood up, von Zehle found a chunk of glass stuck in his right leg and cuts on his right arm. Otherwise, he was all right.

At first, von Zehle, who had worked with Special Forces and taught classes on counter-terrorism, said he thought a car bomb had hit the Military Operations Center. However, as he stepped outside, he saw the U.N. building on fire.

Vieira de Mello was in a meeting when the bomb detonated directly below his third floor office. He crashed through two floors and came to rest on the ground level, his legs pinned by rubble. He was trapped in a small, dark space.

"There were body parts everywhere. Dead and wounded," said von Zehle. "Quite a chaotic situation."

When the man in the U.N. cap came for help, von Zehle followed him to the space where the two people were trapped. As von Zehle peered in, he could see Vieira de Mello, but could not reach him.

The Rescue Attempt

The main stairwell was intact, so von Zehle climbed up and walked to the corner of the third floor where the bomb hit. He was looking for the sliver of light that he knew would be cast by the gap he had peered through at ground level. And he found it.

Head first, von Zehle moved into a hole in the wreckage and worked his way downward, climbing over three dead bodies on the way. As he made his way to the ground floor, he spotted Vieira de Mello.

"I asked his name," von Zehle said. It was not a name von Zehle recognized, but the man acted as if he were in charge. "Is everybody all right? How is everybody?" the man asked.

Von Zehle started to work, using anything that could substitute for the equipment he was accustomed to using back home in the States. A women's purse was filled with rubble and a piece of drapery used to haul it up, again and again.

"Can you move your toes? Can you feel your fingers? What day of the week is it?" von Zehle asked Vieira de Mello, while the diplomat asked about his family and friends, wanting to know how bad things were.

About three hours after the blast, Vieira de Mello stopped talking. He was dead. Fifteen minutes later, Gil (the second man) was freed. He had cuts on his face, and both legs were seriously injured, but he was free.

"I honestly thought we would get them both out," said von Zehle. "If this had happened in almost any other place, we would have been able to get him out."

At 8:00 p.m., von Zehle returned to his room, bone tired. When he awoke the next morning, he heard the news and realized who Vieira de Mello was. He remembered everything they talked about and wrote it down.

In Wilton, where von Zehle served as fire chief before retiring in 2001, the town's chief executive, Paul Hannah, described him as "the sort of guy who would get involved. When he went to a fire, he always was in the front."

PHOTO: MASTER SGT. ROBERTO RAMOS

Sfc. Tametra Sherrod, Retention NCO for the 77th RSC, counsels a Soldier.

RETENTION NCO GOES BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

Standing only 4' 11" tall, Sfc. Tametra Sherrod may be pint-sized, but she towers over many when it comes to going beyond the call of duty and getting the job done as a retention NCO for the 77th Regional Support Command.

Pfc. Micah Rathbun was in a very difficult situation. He had lost his job and had no place to call home. Homeless and broke, he knew he was on a downward spiral when he met Sherrod.

"I knew he was interested in getting back into the service, and I wanted to make that happen for him. However, he lived like a nomad, moving from place to place. So, I didn't know where to find him much of the time," said Sherrod. "Initially, I didn't realize he was homeless."

Working with Rathbun's mother, Susan, Sherrod began tracking Rathbun's whereabouts, promising to contact Susan as soon as she was able to locate him. When Sherrod finally did find Rathbun, Susan was lost for words.

"She spent hours and hours tracking him down, picking him up, counseling him, and making sure he was taken care of," said Susan. "Because he was homeless, she treated him very delicately. She really was absolutely wonderful."

Susan was so impressed with Sherrod's devotion to duty, she wrote to Sherrod's area manager, Master Sgt. Roberto Ramos. That letter made its way to Lt. Gen. James R. Helmly, Chief, U.S. Army Reserve, who recognized Sherrod during a Senior Leadership Seminar held recently in Atlanta.

"When she first contacted me, I was living in a shelter," Rathbun recalled. "With her help, I turned my life around. I went from living in a shelter to renting an apartment in only a few short months. She helped me get my life back on track again."

"She is a great inspiration to me. I see what she has done with her life and how willing she is to do what it takes to help people. She definitely is someone I would like to emulate," added Rathbun.

NYPD COP RAISES FLAG AS ARMY RESERVE SOLDIER

Capt. Martin J. Steiger from Uniondale, New York, has flown the New York Police Department (NYPD) flag in six countries throughout his two-year deployment for Operation Iraqi Freedom. A member of the Army Reserve's 800th Military Police Brigade, Steiger has been working as a liaison officer for the Coalition Forces Land Component Command Provost Marshal's Office (CFLCC PMO) since his activation in January of 2002.

Over the past two years, he has traveled to Bagram, Kandahar, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Uzbekhistan, Oman and Kuwait. In each place, Steiger, a sergeant with the NYPD narcotics division, has raised and photographed the flag, which is embroidered with the words, "NYPD Gone but not forgotten, 9–11–01."

"I'll probably give the flag to the police museum when I get back," said Steiger, who plans to rejoin the NYPD upon his return.

In March, Steiger was presented with the Joint Services Achievement medal in a ceremony held at Camp Arifjan. AR

Capt. Martin Steiger *(left)*, along with fellow NYPD cops, Capt. Vincent Felix *(middle)* and Sgt. John Dandola *(right)*, holds the NYPD flag that has been raised in several countries during operation Iraqi Freedom. Embroidered on the flag are the words, "NYPD GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN, 9–11–01."

PHOTO: SPEC. RACHEL BRUNE, 800TH MP BRIGADE

Global News

DOING WELL BY DOING GOOD

"Doing well by doing good" is a phrase that could be used to describe the heavy construction combat engineers of the Army Reserve's 367th Engineer Battalion. For the second time in three years, the St. Cloud, Minnesota-based 367th participated in Operation Alaskan Road, an ongoing project to connect Alaska's only Native American Reserve to the outside world by way of something the rest of America takes for granted — a paved two-lane highway.

Where the Wind Dies Down

Settled by the Tsimpshia Indians 150 years ago, the village of Metlakatla is nestled on the southern tip of Annette Island near Ketchikan, Alaska, 700 miles north of Seattle, Washington. It is an area dense with the thick woods and craggy terrain of a largely virgin Arctic rain forest.

The town's 1,500 residents can reach Ketchikan by one of two methods — by seaplane or by a weekly ferry. However, while "Metlakatla" means "where the wind dies down," for nine months of the year, 110 mile-an-hour winds make both methods nearly impossible.

For decades, the Tsimpshia lobbied the U.S. government for a road that would connect them to a new ferry dock on Annette Island's northern tip, where the winds were calmer and the trip to Ketchikan could be made daily, year-round to amenities, such as stores, higher education and specialized health care.

In 1996, the U.S. military responded, matching a valuable training opportunity with a real-life need when they introduced a joint service program called "Innovative Readiness Training." During the four to five months that outdoor construction is feasible in that area of the country, troops from across America have been slowly carving out a roadway from some of the nation's most inhospitable landscape, one summer at a time.

PHOTOS THIS SPREAD: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Peter Alich, Saftey NCO for the St. Cloud, Minn.-based 367th Engineer Battalion, keeps an eye on his Soldiers during Operation Alaskan Road.

"We don't get to train with our heavy equipment very often," said Capt. Joel P. Fuerst, rotation commander for the 367th and a computer programmer from Woodbury, Minnesota, who brought 64 Soldiers, augmented by a dozen members from the Ladysmith, Wisconsin-based A Company of the 397th Engineer Battalion, to work their dozers, graders and steamrollers on the project. "So, it kind of works out for everybody."

You Just Dig and Dig

The Army Reserve troops who participate in Operation Alaskan Road join a mix of Air Force, Navy, Marine, and Army National Guard "duration" troops, who serve the length of the April to September construction season in capacities ranging from military ferry pilot to public affairs officer. A three-man team from the Department of Transportation (DOT) is the ultimate authority for the project.

The work isn't easy. First, there's the weather. Ketchikan gets more than 150 inches of rain each year, which may explain its nickname as "America's

Army Reserve Pfc. Ashlee Ohlfs operates the vibe roller, a steamroller-like flattening machine on the under-construction road to Metlakatla on Annette Island, Alaska.

Army Reserve Staff Sgt. 1st Class Maurice Britts with the 367th Engineer Battalion operates an excavator on an Alaskan road during Operation Alaskan Road.

wettest city." For the 367th members participating in Operation Alaskan Road this year, that translated into about nine of 14 days spent working in the rain.

"The first three days here, we had beautiful weather. However, because it was dry, the dust was so thick you could barely see a vehicle 100 meters in front of you," said 1st Sgt. Daniel Korbel of the 367th. "Then it got back to raining, back to mud."

Then there is the terrain itself. When the way to Metlakatla is not obstructed by solid rock requiring regular blasting by Navy Seabees, it is covered in the Arctic rain forest's own peculiar version of dirt — layers of rotting vegetation and oozing muck known as "muskeg," which can run as deep as 20 feet. A man can sink to his thighs in the stuff, so it's hardly an ideal surface for heavy machinery. And it all has to be scraped away, ton by ton.

"You just dig and dig. A lot of the time it's boring work," said DOT contractor Greg Lunch. "And sometimes it gets hairy trying to keep the treads from slipping on this stuff. It's tough on the equipment."

Also hairy is the former logging road used as an access and supply route, which is nothing more than a pulse-quickening hairpin turn into a one-way ticket to the valley below. Two quarry truck drivers with the 367th spent an entire day bringing new rock to the site before the road could even be deemed safe for transport. The signs along the route, declaring "Steep Grade," "Slide Area," and "Sharp Curve," say it all.

"The most common hazard we have around here is just loose rock, which can cause trips and falls," said Staff Sgt. Peter Alich, a warehouse manager from Mankato, Minnesota. "Then you've got water hazards, landslide-type stuff, and working the excavators on slippery ground, as well as the usual problems with operating heavy equipment."

Rolling with the Vibes

The role of the 367th during Operation Alaskan Road basically is to man the trucks and dozers that haul the rock and dump it, and move the big pieces to the bottom and the small pieces to the top. Then they go over the whole thing with a shivering mechanical beast called a "Vibe Roller," a steamroller-like machine that flattens the rocky road into something bordering on drivable.

"It kind of feels like one big massage chair," said Pfc. Ashlee Ohlfs. "Except it's painful when you get off."

Ohlfs is living proof that even a 20-year old female, who measures in at barely five feet tall and needs help reeling in a king salmon, can be a heavy construction road builder. The 397th augmentee, who divides her time between steamrolling, bulldozing and rock hauling, counts her two weeks in the wilderness as the highlight of her military experience.

"I joined the Army Reserve for the college money," said the University of Wisconsin LaCrosse student, who starts school on the Monday she returns from training. "But it's become so much more than that. Here, at the end of the day, you feel pretty good about what you're doing. It's hard to believe you can be part of a program that has so much real purpose."

"It's basically grunt work," said Pfc. Joshua Mistic, a Bemidji, Minnesota, native enrolled in the University of North Dakota's physical therapy program, as he emerged from clearing a culvert used to divert the water that constantly trickles down the mountainside away from the road. "But it makes you feel good. You're getting trained and meeting new people, and you can't beat the scenery."

The goal this summer was to get to Cowboy Creek, and the Army Reserve has once again combined to meet this objective.

"These Soldiers were definitely one of the better rotations," said Army National Guard Maj. Rob Foust, the operations officer for the 2003 construction season. "They're a mature unit with a lot of experienced people. They obviously know a lot of tricks that you don't pick up in the military, and they've done very well."

They've also done a lot of good.

Water Will Be Served

Walk by one of southern Alaska's looming rock faces, and the crisp, cool water trickling down the boulders into sparkling streams below looks good enough to drink. Well, almost.

By the time the water makes its way down the mountains into the streams, it has become brown with dirt and muskeg, and needs cleaning up. That was the job of two Army Reserve Soldiers, Spec. Jeremy Johnson, a diesel technician from Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Pfc. Wyatt Eisenbraun, a park ranger at Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park in Mandan, North Dakota, during Operation Alaskan Road. Both were in Alaska with the 348th Quartermaster Detachment, water purification specialists out of Bismarck, North Dakota.

At their home stations, the Soldiers don't have much opportunity to work with the Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Units (ROWPUs) that help keep water safe for drinking. However, in Alaska, they have the chance to do it all — take the water right out of the stream, purify it, drink it, and do all of the maintenance on the ROWPU units. They also get to deliver the water.

"We have a 20,000-gallon bladder here that we fill from the machine, and we use that to fill up the truck," said Eisenbraun. "Then we drive around and make sure the bladder at base camp, as well as the water buffaloes used out at the work site, are full."

Sounds simple enough. However, the camp goes through 7,000 gallons of clean water a day. So, there always needs to be around 20,000 gallons on hand in case the unit breaks down.

"Which is likely," joked Johnson.

Operation Alaskan Road employs a vintage 1990 ROWPU, which clatters away in a single-car, garage-sized shed on the banks of one of Annette Island's mountain streams. And, while it doesn't give the impression of reliability, it has been chugging out clean water at the rate of about 600 gallons an hour, every hour, all summer, without incident.

"The machine is self-testing. It'll shut itself off if it's not cleaning the water right," added Johnson. "But you need to check the gauges every two hours, check the chlorine levels, and then go back to the deliveries."

Neither Soldier will claim that water purification is glamorous work. However, thanks to Operation Alaskan Road, the way to run and maintain a ROWPU in the middle of nowhere has become crystal clear, so to speak, for Johnson and Eisenbraun. And there's little doubt that water will be served.

Army Reserve Spec. Jeremy Johnson, a water purification specialist out of Bismarck, N.D., checks the gauges at the Reserve Osmosis water purification system that keeps the base camp for operation Alaskan Road supplied with the 7,000 gallons of potable water it consumes each day.

PHOTO: SGT. FRANK H. PULLIGAINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

BLACK HAWK UP

After years of relying on other services' rescue crews or its own combat teams to extract downed aircrews, the Army is training its own teams in the dangerous and specialized area of Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) operations. And the Army Reserve is flying point.

For two weeks every August, out in the same Nevada desert where the Navy trains its TOPGUN jet pilots, the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center at Naval Air Station Fallon hosts "Desert Rescue." This is when CSAR specialists from the Navy, Air Force and Marines come together to conduct joint training in the recovery of aircrew members shot down in hostile environments.

In an unusual move, this year's guest list was expanded to include teams from the 3rd Special Forces Group from Fort Bragg, North Carolina — and their personal Army Reserve aviators, the Clearwater, Florida-based Charlie Company, 1st of the 159th Aviation Battalion.

"This is a unique experience," said Capt. James H. Fitzgerald, III, Charlie Company Commander. "We're an Army Reserve unit assigned directly to the 18th Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, and we specialize in CSAR. What we bring to the training is a certain skill set that the other services have, but the Army didn't have until us."

That skill set didn't exist for the Army a year ago — but then again, neither did Charlie Company. The unit was organized in Clearwater last September after Congressional legislation brought Black Hawk helicopters back to the Army Reserve for the first time since 1996. And Fitzgerald's unit became the proud stewards of eight new UH-60s, right off the assembly line of the Sikorsky plant in Stratford, Connecticut. Another unit, Delta Company, 158th Aviation Battalion, formed last winter in Victorville, California.

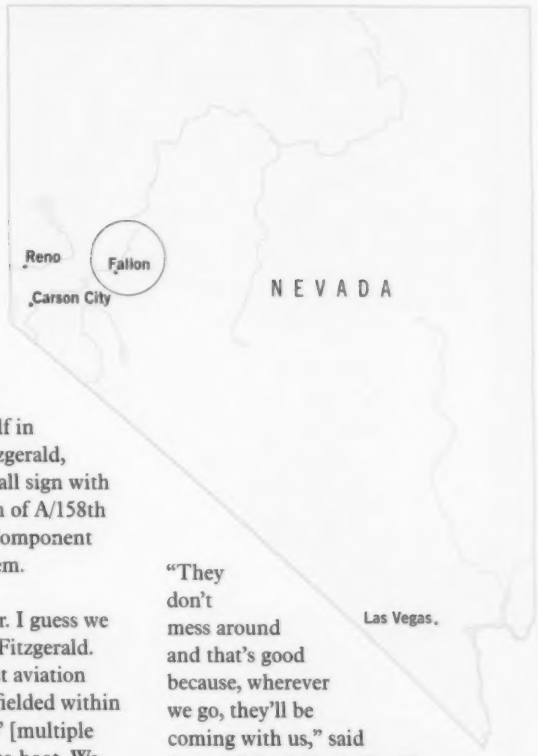
According to Fitzgerald, recruiting for the team wasn't a problem.

"When word got around that we had Black Hawks, they were lining up to join," he said laughing.

Charlie Company was born as Alpha Company of the 158th Aviation Battalion, a resurrection of the legendary Huey-flying A/158 Assault Helicopter Battalion, "Ghost Riders," that had distinguished itself in Vietnam. According to Fitzgerald, his unit appropriated the call sign with the enthusiastic permission of A/158th veterans until the Active Component asked them to work for them.

"It was an incredible honor. I guess we did everything well," said Fitzgerald. "Now we're among the first aviation units to be organized and fielded within a year, and a 'multi-compo' [multiple component] aviation unit to boot. We send guys to Fort Bragg to train with the 18th, and they send their folks to train with us."

One of the active duty aircrew members that came out to join C Company for Desert Rescue was impressed by what he saw.



"They don't mess around and that's good because, wherever we go, they'll be coming with us," said Spec. Michael Muskalla. "I've never worked with a Reserve unit before and I didn't know what to expect.

An Army Reserve Black Hawk crew with the Clearwater, Fla.-based Charlie Company, 1st of the 159th Aviation Battalion lands to take on a Special Forces rescue team during a combat search and rescue exercise at Naval Air Station Fallon in Fallon, Nev.

PHOTO: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

But they've certainly dispelled all of my doubts. Any time my colonel wants to send me to Clearwater, I'll be happy to go."

Charlie Company joined 15 other units from the Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard for Desert Rescue, learning to conduct hazardous desert rescues in each other's languages.

"We're trying to standardize our techniques and bring them into line with the other services. They've been doing this kind of work a lot longer than the Army and, since we're going to be working together, we want to make sure that we're all on the same page," said pilot CW4 Seth Johansen.

The training came to its climax on August 13 at a mock embassy compound nestled among the plywood and camouflage-netted buildings of NAS Fallon's Military Operational Urban Training (MOUT) site, better known as "Combat Town."

With Navy Lt. Jason Young playing a seriously wounded pilot, Fitzgerald's crew was radioed to conduct rescue operations while enemy patrols, played convincingly by National Guard soldiers out of Fallon assigned to the 221st Armored Cavalry Regiment, raged through Combat Town's narrow streets trying to hunt Young down. The two Army Reserve Black Hawks landed just outside the embassy compound, dropping off Special Forces team members. They then went airborne again to provide cover for the rescue teams.

The rescue troops rushed the compound, clearing it building-by-building until they found Young and radioed up to the Black Hawks for their ride out. Within moments, Charlie Company's two brand new Black Hawks were getting duty again, tilting to near-vertical before touching down and opening their doors for the Special Forces team and their precious cargo. The "Ghost Riders" had gotten everyone out alive.

Two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters flown by Army Reserve aviators take off with their special forces passengers after completing a CSR exercise.

PHOTOS THIS SPREAD: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

A Special Forces team inserted on the ground by Army Reserve aviators rushes the gate of a mock embassy compound in "Combat Town" during a CSR exercise.

A crew chief with the Army Reserve aviators of the Clearwater, Fla.-based Charlie Company, 1st of the 159th Aviation Battalion mans his door-gunner seat on the way to a night landing exercise.

"The Army's getting it together," said Woody Muller, observing the exercises with the Department of Defense's Joint Personnel Recovery Agency. "By sending these guys out here, they're getting themselves up to speed with the rest of the services."

For a brand new unit, the Army Reserve aviators of Charlie Company, 1st of the 159th Aviation Battalion, are well on their way to living up to the heralded reputation of the "Ghost Riders." But, according to Fitzgerald, they still have a lot to learn.

"We're getting there," he said. "But we still have to work through some things, which is all part of being a new unit with a new mission, and learning from organizations like the Navy."

"We make training a top priority. Every weekend drill, we're out flying a mission, sharpening our skills," Fitzgerald added. "These guys make it easy for me. They have a tremendous amount of pride in what they do, and we all want to make sure that, if we get the call, we'll be ready."

ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS FROM WISCONSIN MOVE AMMO IN KOREA

Compared to her role in the Army Reserve, Spec. April Trace would say that her civilian job as a pastry chef is a piece of cake.

"There really is no comparison. If I don't do something right in the kitchen, I can throw it out and start all over again. However, with this, you don't get a second chance," said Trace, referring to her job loading artillery shells onto a ship in a Korean port.

Trace and 21 other members of the 826th Ordnance Company located in Madison, Wisconsin, recently completed three weeks of annual training in Pusan, Korea. Their mission was to work with South Korean soldiers to inventory and move 155mm artillery rounds that needed to be rotated out of the Army's largest ammunition stockpile.

All of the 826th Soldiers assigned to the mission were trained in the Army's Military Occupation Skill (MOS) 55B, ammunition handler.

"We have all been school-trained," said Staff. Sgt. Scott Plehn. "But we have to practice."

And the group practices a lot.

Unit members spent most of their time counting and recounting thousands of the large shells that were bundled together in palletized groups.

"We inventory them. Then the Koreans inventory them. Then the boat crew inventories them. If we all agree on the number, the load goes on the ship. But, if there is a discrepancy, we all have to count them again," added Plehn.

Sgt. Armando Quintero *(right)* directs Staff Sgt. Scott Plehn to move a pallet of artillery shells during training at a South Korean port. Both are with the 826th Ordnance Company.

In addition to inventorying ammunition, the members of the 826th also made sure the shells were properly packaged and marked for shipment. "We mark the loads so that everyone knows what kind of ammo they are dealing with," said Spec. Robert Sutalski of Parkford, Illinois, as he stuck some bright orange placards on the pallets.

Plehn said the shells were very stable because they were being shipped without the fuses needed for detonation. "But we are still dealing with live ammo, so there always is the potential for danger," he said.

Another one of the challenges facing the members of the 826th was dealing with the varying opinions concerning safety measures.

"While U.S. Army procedures call for as few people as possible to work with the ammunition in a confined space, such as the cargo hold of a ship, the Koreans like to use a lot of people so the work goes faster," said Plehn. "We had to make some adjustments with them to get the job done and still keep everybody safe."

The mission was the first time Pfc. Lee Johnson, an emergency medical technician student from Madison, Wisconsin, got to work in his Army occupation.

"In 55B school, they told us that we are the 'backbone of the Army.' Now I know what they meant. If we don't do our jobs well, the people on the front lines won't be able to fight," he said. "We all just want to do a good job." AR

PHOTOS THIS SPREAD, SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

Spec. Robert Sutalski *(right)* and Spec. April Trace of the Army Reserve's 826th Ordnance Company from Madison, Wis., affix labels to a shipment of artillery shells during training at a South Korean port.

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LTG JAMES R. HELMLY
CHIEF, ARMY RESERVE
COMMANDING GENERAL
U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND

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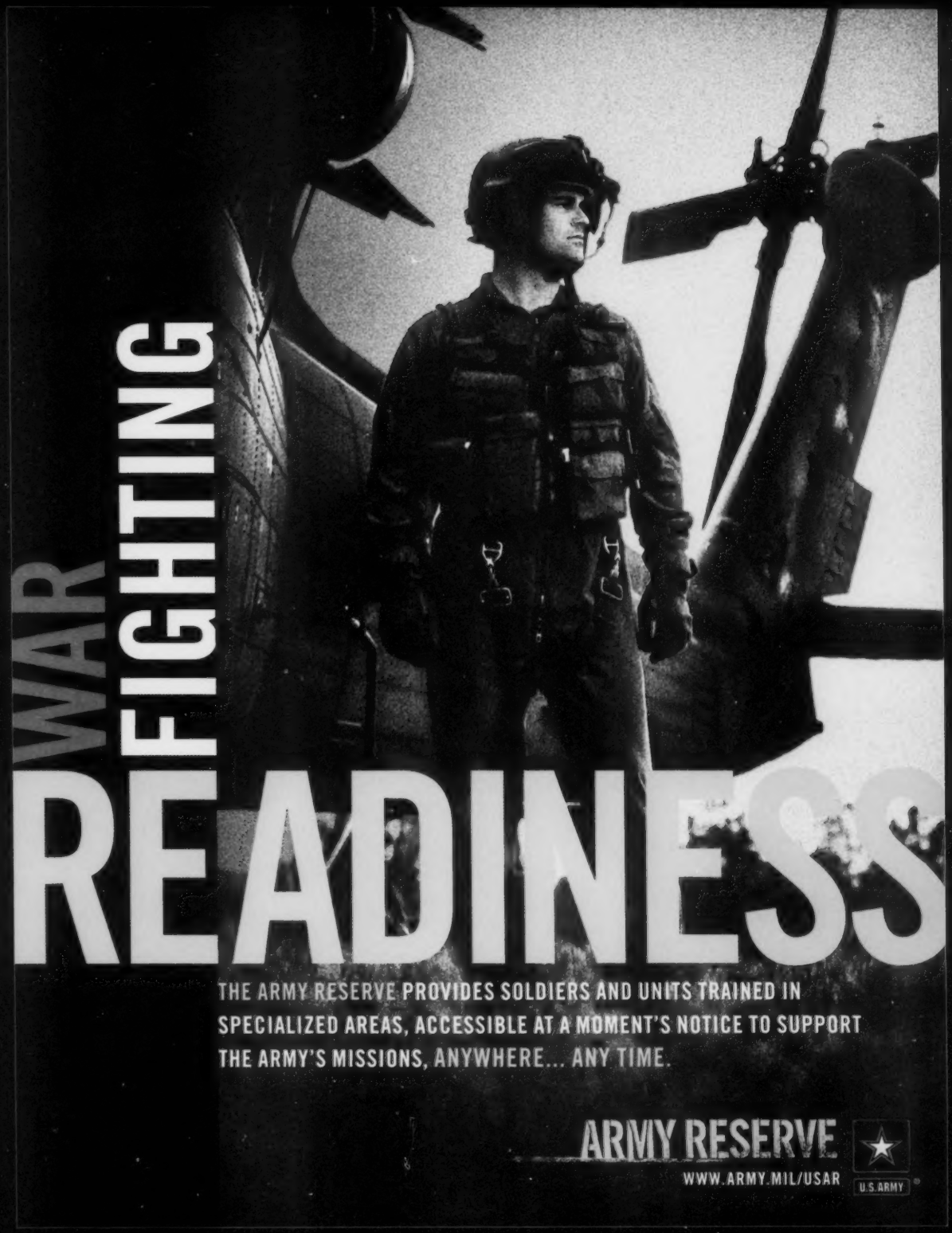
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IN THE NEXT ISSUE

THE FUTURE OF THE ARMY RESERVE

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